HISTORY OF THE DIOCESE OF EXETER.

W. E. Gladstone

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A HISTORY OF THE DIOCESE OF EXETER

A HISTORY

OF THE

DIOCESE OF EXETER.

BY THE

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EXETER:
PRINTED BY WILLIAM POLLARD & CO. LTD., BAMPFYLDE STREET.
1922.

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Dedicated,

with their gracious permission,

to

The Lord Bishop of Exeter

and

The Lord Bishop of Truro,

inheritors of those who

for fourteen hundred years in unbroken succession

have ruled

the Church in Devon and Cornwall.

CORRIGENDA.

Page 75, note, *for* v, 654, *read* iv, 654.
„ 87, note, *for* 57, *read* 52, 59.
„ 113, note, *for* xxix, *read* xxxix.

ADDENDA IN INDEX.

Cadbury, 66, 247.
Cadeleigh, 248.
Callington, 20, 297, 300, 451, 565.
Cornwood, 263, 300, 542.
Creed, 8, 460.
Dowland, 94, 96.
Down St Mary, 26, 56, 57, 247, 285, 553.
Drewsteignton, 440.
Duloe, 251, 322.
Dunchideock, 248, 258, 421.
Dunkeswell, 9, 56, 58, 85, 86, 102, 113, 161, 170, 241, 353, 357, 494, 563, 584.
Dunsford, 96, 149, 248.
Dunterton, 249.
Lewannick, 98.
Topsham, 43, 55, 57, 206, 207, 270, 303, 412, 440, 450, 494, 564.
Torbryan, 571, 578, 581.
Torpoint, 535.
Torquay, 493, 502, 518, 535, 544, 580.
Torre, 9, 56, 57, 65, 100, 113, 120, 161, 170, 248, 262, 263, 350, 353, 357, 361.
Torrington, 54, 131, 132, 160, 178, 243, 250, 282, 288, 319, 335, 340, 462, 464, 552.
Totnes, 9, 53-55, 58, 61-63, 128, 131, 212, 249, 275, 280, 283, 288, 298, 307, 440, 465, 551, 556, 567.
Totnes Priory, 62, 64, 73, 78, 126, 130, 161, 170, 176, 179, 263, 276, 353.
Zennor, 6, 138, 483.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER.		PAGE.
	PREFACE	ix
	CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE	xiii
I.	THE WORK OF THE MISSIONARIES	1
II.	EARLY CHRISTIANITY IN CORNWALL AND DEVON	14
III.	SETTLEMENT OF THE SEE AT EXETER	40
IV.	MONASTIC HOUSES IN THE DIOCESE	64
V.	THE BUILDERS OF THE NORMAN CATHEDRAL	104
VI.	THE COMING OF THE FRIARS	115
VII.	THE ARCHITECTS OF THE PRESENT CATHEDRAL	123
VIII.	OTHER CATHEDRAL BUILDERS	164
IX.	BISHOP GRANDISSON	192
X.	THE BLACK DEATH	235
XI.	GRANDISSON'S SUCCESSORS	252
XII.	BISHOP LACY AND CHURCH REBUILDING	296
XIII.	THE EVE OF THE REFORMATION	314
XIV.	THE REFORMATION PERIOD	330
XV.	SPOLIATION OF THE CHURCH	350
XVI.	THE TUDOR QUEENS	372
XVII.	THE CHURCH OF THE EARLY STUARTS	388
XVIII.	THE PURITAN TYRANNY	405
XIX.	THE LATER STUARTS AND THE REVOLUTION	418
XX.	HANOVERIAN TIMES	445
XXI.	JOHN WESLEY IN THE WEST	474
XXII.	THE VICTORIAN AGE	490
XXIII.	CHURCHES AND THEIR TREASURES	548
XXIV.	A GENERAL REVIEW	586
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	597
	INDEX	605
	LIST OF SUBSCRIBERS	623

PREFACE.

ONLY once before has a *History* of the Exeter diocese been attempted, and that was published more than a quarter of a century ago. For divers reasons the work needed to be done afresh, one being that copies of that book have for long been unobtainable, and another that the writer was only to a limited degree able to consult the diocesan archives, especially the *Episcopal Registers*, which are the most important original authorities on the subject. These have now been examined—thanks to the kind permission of the Lord Bishop and the Dean of Exeter, and the Diocesan Registrar, Mr H. W. Michelmore, with the assistance of the Diocesan Archivist, Prebendary J. F. Chanter.

This book, written at the request of the Lord Bishop of Exeter, aims at giving a history of the Church in Devon and Cornwall from the earliest ages down to the year 1900—a convenient and suitable *terminus ad quem*, for not only is it the end of the century and of the Victorian Age, but also it saw the resignation of Bishop Bickersteth, who is now deceased; and it seems fitting to leave to a future historian the recording of the work of his successors, all three of whom still live. It should be added, however, that the chronicling of events of the Church in Cornwall is not carried beyond the year 1876, when the new see of Truro was founded.

My labour has been very much lightened by my being able to consult the rich stores of learning, that have been given to the world through the publication of the researches

of many scholars and students. Particularly valuable is the work that has been carried on for sixty years by "The Devonshire Association for the advancement of Science, Literature, and Art"; and the two western counties are fortunate indeed in having many learned Societies, periodicals, and authors, whose productions are most helpful to the ecclesiastical historian.

Besides these, I personally am deeply grateful to two general scholars—Miss Boggis of Tavistock and the Reverend J. M. Vaizey Hope of Clare College, Cambridge, and to one local historian—the Reverend A. P. Lancefield of Exeter, each of whom has carefully and most kindly revised the whole of my work; and also to several specialists, who have assisted me in particular subjects or periods—the Reverend S. Baring-Gould of Lew Trenchard for the history of the earliest centuries, the Reverend H. L. Bickersteth of Tavistock for the age of Bishop Grandisson, Dr F. E. Warren of Bardwell for liturgiology, the Reverend Maitland Kelly of Kelly for campanology, and Mr John Newnham, A.R.I.B.A., of London for architecture and ecclesiastical antiquities. More than all am I indebted to the Master of Peterhouse (Sir Adolphus W. Ward, Litt.D.), who has most generously placed at my service his wide and profound historical knowledge and accurate scholarship by not only revising the whole work but also effecting numerous corrections and improvements. With such aids I have the more confidence that my statements are reliable and my deductions reasonable.

The value of money is always altering; and that so much and so irregularly, that I have thought it well, whenever mention is made of any sum, to add also its modern equivalent, *i.e.*, what would be its purchasing power in 1900 A.D. In

this I have received help from the staff of the Coin Department of the British Museum, and have based my calculations chiefly on Rogers Ruding's *Annals of the Coinage of Great Britain*, and *Money and the Mechanism of Exchanges* by W. J. Jevons. From such works it is apparent that the depreciation in the value of money was fairly regular from 1050 down to 1550, and that at the close of that period money was worth about a quarter of what it was at the beginning. But from the middle of the sixteenth century, chiefly as a consequence of politico-religious changes, the depreciation was greatly accelerated, and it became even more rapid in the eighteenth century, being most marked in the age of the French War. We find, then, that, compared with the standard of the year 1900, the value of money was about 47 times more at the time of the Norman Conquest, about 20 times more shortly before 1300, and about 10 times more in the days of the Spanish Armada, and that £100 of the year 1800 would be worth nearly £250 in 1900. Such calculations must not be regarded as absolutely conclusive, for in past ages man's manner of living differed greatly from that now in vogue, and consequently he spent his money differently; but they will at least supply estimates sufficiently approximate for readers to gain a fairly correct apprehension of the real value of the sums of money that are mentioned in this *History*.

The references to authorities, mentioned in the foot-notes, are couched in concise form, but in the *Bibliography* at the end of the volume are set forth in full the titles of the various works—all of which have been found useful in the composition of this book.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE.

c. 450–c. 600.	CONVERSION OF CORNWALL AND DEVON.
c. 460.	ST GERMAN'S MISSIONARY WORK IN TAMAR-LAND.
c. 594.	DEATH OF ST PETROCK AT BODMIN.
680.	WINFRID (ST BONIFACE) BORN AT CREDITON.
705.	FOUNDING OF THE SEE OF SHERBORNE UNDER BISHOP ALDHELM.
877.	DEATH OF ST NEOT.
909.	FOUNDING OF THE SEE OF CREDITON UNDER BISHOP EADWULF.
925–940.	REIGN OF ATHELSTAN.
931.	CONAN MADE BISHOP OF ST GERMAN'S.
961.	TAVISTOCK ABBEY FOUNDED BY EARL ORDGAR.
1043.	THE CORNISH SEE UNITED TO THAT OF CREDITON UNDER BISHOP LYFING.
1050.	THE SEE TRANSFERRED FROM CREDITON TO EXETER.
1050–1072.	BISHOP LEOFRIC.
1068.	EXETER SURRENDERED TO WILLIAM I.
1072–1103.	BISHOP OSBERN.
1086.	THE DOMESDAY SURVEY.
1088.	TOTNES PRIORY FOUNDED BY JOEL OF TOTNES.
1089.	ST NICHOLAS'S PRIORY, EXETER, FOUNDED BY WILLIAM II.
1107–1137.	BISHOP WILLIAM WARELWAST.
1107.	BARNSTAPLE PRIORY FOUNDED BY JOEL OF TOTNES.
1112–1200.	REBUILDING OF EXETER CATHEDRAL.
1134.	BUCKFAST REFOUNDED AS A CISTERCIAN ABBEY.
1138–1155.	BISHOP ROBERT CHICHESTER.
1141.	FORDE ABBEY FOUNDED BY LADY ADELICIA DE BRIONIIS.
1155–1160.	BISHOP ROBERT WARELWAST.
1162–1184.	BISHOP BARTHOLOMEW ISCANUS.
c. 1170.	CANONSLEIGH PRIORY FOUNDED BY WALTER DE CLAVILLE.
1186–1191.	BISHOP JOHN THE CHANTER.
1194–1206.	BISHOP HENRY MARSHAL.

1196.	TORRE ABBEY FOUNDED BY WILLIAM, LORD BREWER.
1201.	DUNKESWELL ABBEY FOUNDED BY WILLIAM, LORD BREWER.
1214–1223.	BISHOP SIMON OF APULIA.
1220.	FRITHELSTOCK PRIORY FOUNDED BY ROBERT BEAUCHAMP.
1224–1244.	BISHOP WILLIAM BRUERE.
1225.	OFFICE OF DEAN OF EXETER INSTITUTED.
C. 1240.	THE FRANCISCANS SETTLED IN EXETER.
1244.	THE DOMINICANS SETTLED IN EXETER.
1245–1257.	BISHOP RICHARD BLONDY.
1247.	NEWENHAM ABBEY FOUNDED BY REGINALD AND WILLIAM MOHUN.
1258–1280.	BISHOP WALTER BRONESCOMBE.
1258.	COMMENCEMENT OF THE EXETER EPISCOPAL REGISTERS.
C. 1265.	REBUILDING OF THE PRESENT CATHEDRAL BEGUN.
1267.	GLASNEY COLLEGE FOUNDED BY BISHOP BRONESCOMBE.
1280.	BUCKLAND ABBEY FOUNDED BY AMICIA, COUNTESS OF DEVON.
1280–1291.	BISHOP PETER QUIVEL.
1283.	MURDER OF PRECENTOR WALTER LECCHELADE.
1287.	SYNOD OF EXETER.
1291.	TAXATIO OF POPE NICHOLAS IV.
1292–1307.	BISHOP THOMAS BYTTON.
1308–1326.	BISHOP WALTER STAPELDON.
1314.	STAPELDON HALL (EXETER COLLEGE) AT OXFORD FOUNDED.
1327.	BISHOP JAMES BERKELEY.
1327–1369.	BISHOP JOHN GRANDISSON.
1328 (DEC. 18TH).	HIGH ALTAR OF THE CATHEDRAL CONSECRATED.
1332.	ATTEMPTED VISITATION OF ARCHBISHOP MEOPHAM.
C. 1345.	COMPLETION OF THE PRESENT CATHEDRAL.
1348–1350.	THE BLACK DEATH.
1361–1362.	RETURN OF THE BLACK DEATH.
1370–1394.	BISHOP THOMAS BRANTYNGHAM.
1384.	VISITATION OF ARCHBISHOP COURTENAY.
1395–1419.	BISHOP EDMUND STAFFORD.
1419.	BISHOP JOHN CATRIK.
1420–1455.	BISHOP EDMUND LACY.
1458–1465.	BISHOP GEORGE NEVILLE.

1465–1478. BISHOP JOHN BOTHE.
1478–1487. BISHOP PETER COURTENAY.
1487–1492. BISHOP RICHARD FOXE.
1493–1495. BISHOP OLIVER KING.
1495–1501. BISHOP RICHARD REDMAYNE.
1502–1504. BISHOP JOHN ARUNDELL.
1505–1519. BISHOP HUGH OLDHAM.
1519–1551. BISHOP JOHN VEYSEY.
1532. THOMAS BENET BURNT AT EXETER.
1536. SUPPRESSION OF THE SMALLER MONASTERIES.
1537–1538. DISSOLUTION OF THE GREATER MONASTERIES.
1545. SUPPRESSION OF THE COLLEGES, CHANTRIES, AND HOSPITALS.
1549. THE WESTERN REBELLION.
1551–1553. BISHOP MILES COVERDALE.
1553–1554. BISHOP JOHN VEYSEY (RESTORED).
1555–1559. BISHOP JAMES TURBERVILLE.
1557. AGNES PREST BURNT AT EXETER.
1560–1570. BISHOP WILLIAM ALLEY.
1571–1578. BISHOP WILLIAM BRADBRIDGE.
1579–1594. BISHOP JOHN WOOLTON.
1595–1597. BISHOP GERVASE BABINGTON.
1598–1621. BISHOP WILLIAM COTTON.
1621–1626. BISHOP VALENTINE CARY.
1627–1641. BISHOP JOSEPH HALL.
1642–1659. BISHOP RALPH BROWNRIGG.
1660–1662. BISHOP JOHN GAUDEN.
1661. RESTORATION OF EXETER CATHEDRAL.
1662. ACT OF UNIFORMITY.
1662–1667. BISHOP SETH WARD.
1667–1676. BISHOP ANTHONY SPARROW.
1676–1688. BISHOP THOMAS LAMPLUGH.
1685. PROTESTANT REFUGEES FROM FRANCE.
1688 (NOVR.). WILLIAM OF ORANGE IN DEVONSHIRE.
1689–1707. BISHOP SIR JONATHAN TRELAWNY.
1690. EJECTION OF THE NONJURORS.
1708–1716. BISHOP OFSPRING BLACKALL.
1717–1724. BISHOP LANCELOT BLACKBURNE.
1717. CONVOCATION SILENCED.
1724–1742. BISHOP STEPHEN WESTON.
1742–1746. BISHOP NICHOLAS CLAGETT.
1743–1782. JOHN WESLEY'S VISITS TO DEVON AND CORNWALL.
1746–1761. SAMUEL WALKER, CURATE AT TRURO.
1747–1762. BISHOP GEORGE LAVINGTON.
1762–1777. BISHOP THE HONOURABLE FREDERICK KEPPEL.

1778–1792.	BISHOP JOHN ROSS.
1792–1796.	BISHOP WILLIAM BULLER.
1797–1803.	BISHOP HENRY REGINALD COURTENAY.
1803–1807.	BISHOP JOHN FISHER.
1807–1820.	BISHOP THE HONOURABLE GEORGE PELHAM.
1811.	INAUGURATION OF THE SOCIETY FOR THE EDUCATION OF THE POOR.
1818.	THE CHURCH BUILDING SOCIETY FOUNDED.
1820–1830.	BISHOP WILLIAM CAREY.
1830.	BISHOP CHRISTOPHER BETHELL.
1831–1869.	BISHOP HENRY PHILLPOTTS.
1833.	PUBLICATION OF THE FIRST OF THE "TRACTS FOR THE TIMES."
1836.	TITHE COMMUTATION ACT.
1839–1840.	LITIGATION CONCERNING THE DEANERY OF EXETER.
1847–1850.	THE GORHAM CONTROVERSY.
1848.	MISS SELLON SETTLED AT DEVONPORT.
1848.	SURPLICE RIOTS AT ST SIDWELL'S, EXETER.
1851.	SYNOD OF EXETER.
1852.	THE GEORGE RUNDLE PRYNNE ENQUIRY.
1852.	REVIVAL OF CONVOCATION.
1860.	PUBLICATION OF "ESSAYS AND REVIEWS."
1861–1867.	THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE AT EXETER.
1869–1885.	BISHOP FREDERICK TEMPLE.
1870–1877.	RESTORATION OF EXETER CATHEDRAL.
1872.	FIRST DIOCESAN CONFERENCE AT EXETER.
1874.	DECISION IN THE EXETER CATHEDRAL REREDOS CASE.
1876.	CHURCH CONGRESS AT PLYMOUTH.
1876.	FOUNDATION OF THE SEE OF TRURO.
1877 (APRIL 25TH).	CONSECRATION OF EDWARD WHITE BENSON, 1ST BISHOP OF TRURO.
1878.	PHILLPOTTS STUDENTSHIPS FOUNDED.
1885–1900.	BISHOP EDWARD HENRY BICKERSTETH.
1894.	CHURCH CONGRESS AT EXETER.
1897.	CONSECRATION OF BISHOP (TREFUSIS) OF CREDITON.
1901–1903.	BISHOP HERBERT EDWARD RYLE.
1903–1916.	BISHOP ARCHIBALD ROBERTSON.
1916.	BISHOP LORD RUPERT ERNEST WILLIAM GASCOYNE CECIL.
1918.	FOUNDING OF THE ARCHDEACONRY OF PLYMOUTH.

CHAPTER I.

THE WORK OF THE MISSIONARIES.

VERY remarkable is the local nomenclature in the south-west corner of England, for it is so thoroughly ecclesiastical. There is no other district in the United Kingdom, or in Europe, or perhaps in the whole world, whose hagiology is more extensively and deeply impressed upon its place-names, and is so patent to all who visit it, or even glance at its topography. The reason is a simple one—no other region was so abundantly blest in the number of its early Christian missionaries, Celtic missionaries, who were extraordinarily zealous in spreading the Faith, and whose special characteristic in method was to found many churches, each bearing the name of its founder. In other parts of England it is different; *e.g.*, in East Anglia the local saints can be counted on the fingers of one hand, or certainly of two; but in Devon and Cornwall they are numbered by the hundred, and those two counties, especially the latter, may well bear the proud and honourable title of "the Land of Saints."

For long ages it has been acknowledged that the country that afterwards constituted the diocese of Exeter was christianized at an early date, and by Celtic missionaries. But more exact information was scanty, and enquiry elicited little more than a seemingly hopeless jumble of incredible legends connected with names of obscure preachers and teachers, who came—apparently indiscriminately—from Wales and Ireland and Brittany. Consequently a former historian of the diocese, writing only so recently as 1895, felt himself constrained to confess that "at what period or under what influences the Christian Church was established in this distant province, we have no means of ascertaining."* Indeed Canon

* H. Reynolds, 2; *Celtic Christianity*, 90; *British Saints*, I, vii.

Thomas Taylor, in his scholarly *Celtic Christianity of Cornwall*, has found it needful to devote a whole chapter to arguing that the Cornish saints were not eponymous, but were historic persons, in order to combat the serious doubts entertained concerning their existence. The difficulty is due chiefly to the lack of any documentary evidence that is worthy of credence. No men have studied more fully the subject of British saints than the Reverend Sabine Baring-Gould and the Reverend John Fisher, and they not only declare that "there is no contemporary record of their lives and labours," but they tell us that there is only one biography that is nearly contemporary—that of St Samson, which was written a generation or two after his time; and that all others are much posterior in date, belonging mostly to the eleventh or twelfth century, or even to a later date.

Not a few of these biographies are barefaced forgeries, fabricated merely for the purpose of supporting a claim to property, or of deterring sacrilegious persons from violating the rights or privileges of a sanctuary; and others, which were composed with a more worthy object in view, have been freely illustrated by far-fetched miracles, which cannot but fail to convince the candid student of history. A typical example of this, and one not lacking in humour—especially as narrated by Mr Baring-Gould—is the legend of St Budoc. His mother Azenor was the daughter of the King of Brest, and was married to a neighbouring prince, the Count of Goëlo. When her mother died, her father married again, and the step-mother, wishing to be rid of her, accused her of infidelity, with the result that she was condemned to be put in a barrel and cast into the sea. "She floated in the cider-cask for five months, tossed up and down by the waves. During all this time she was supplied with victuals by an angel, who must have thrust them in through the bung-hole, and, marvellous to relate, the barrel always maintained its balance. While thus drifting, Azenor became a mother, and was assisted by St Brigid, who acted as midwife. Budoc was born in the barrel. Eventually the cask was washed up at a place called Bellus-portus in Ireland. An Irish peasant, seeing the jetsam on the shore, and supposing that it con-

tained liquor, procured a gimlet, and would have tapped it, had not the babe from within shouted, 'Do not hurt us.' 'And who may you be inside there?' inquired the Irishman. 'I am a child desiring baptism,' replied the infant. The native ran off to the nearest abbey, and told his story. 'Surely you are deceiving me,' said the Abbot. 'Is it likely I should tell you of the find,' replied the man, 'if there had been anything better than a baby in the butt?' The Abbot released Azenor and her child from their long confinement, and, astonished at the miracle, on the morrow baptized the young Budoc and educated him."*

Would that we had one of the three copies of the collection of such records of Cornish saints as were still extant in the time of Bishop Grandisson, who in 1330 directed that transcriptions of these were to be made and sent to Exeter!† Alas! that John of Tynemouth did not include Devon and Cornwall, when about the same time he toured through England and Wales, collecting material for his *Sanctilogium* and *Martyrologium*. And how much more helpful would have been John Capgrave's *Nova Legenda Angliae* and William of Worcester's *Itinerary* of the fifteenth century, and John Leland's *Itinerary* of the sixteenth, if they had been less credulous, and had been possessed of critical faculties!

Recent investigation and historical criticism, however, have succeeded in shedding much light upon this subject, and have banished many of the shadows of ignorance and misconception; so that it now appears that, of all the dioceses of England (possibly excluding Wales), that which was afterwards formed of the counties of Devon and Cornwall may lay claim to the honourable distinction of being the earliest that could with any fulness of signification be termed Christian. In saying this we do not forget the statements of Origen and Tertullian to the effect that Christ had been preached and had been acknowledged in this country, or the historical fact that British bishops were present at Arles and at other fourth century Councils on the Continent, or the mention

* *British Saints*, I, 6, 331; *Celtic Christianity*, 96.

† *Register*, 585.

of the early martyrdoms in our land of St Alban and of Aaron and Julius. But there is not sufficient evidence to show that Christianity had gained any extensive hold in those parts of Britain, and the impression that we receive is that the Church was merely sporadic, consisting of comparatively few converts among a heathen population. In Devon and Cornwall, however, it was different; for not only have we records of hosts of missionaries coming from other Celtic lands, but the large number of place-names, the dedications of very many churches, and hundreds of early Christian crosses and other monuments, still existing, all corroborate the contention that in the sixth century Devon and Cornwall might be regarded as, in a very real sense, a Christian land.

The testimony of ancient worked stones is not to be passed over. Those in Cornwall number over four hundred, the great majority being crosses, most of them placed near churches or by the wayside, and forty-three of them bear inscriptions. Their form marks them out as Christian monuments, and the lettering—Romano-British, and in a few cases Ogham—is indicative of an age not very long after the Roman occupation. The inscriptions, which are sepulchral, in most cases consist merely of the name of the person buried, together with his father's name; but some are definitely Christian, *e.g.*, a pillar-stone at St Erth with the legend "Hic in pacem requievit Cunaide," an altar-slab at Camborne with "Leuiut iusit hec altare pro anima sua," a pillar-stone at Cardynham with "Oñi eps," and a cross-base at St Cleer with "Doniert rogavit pro anima." Furthermore, there are six examples of the chi-rho—one each at South Hill, St Endellion, Phillack, and Lanteglos-by-Fowey, and two at St Just-in-Penwith. This symbol is known to have been employed in Gaul only till A.D. 493, and its use would probably not have lasted more than a century longer in Britain.*

The conversion of the Damnonii—for the name Cornubia does not occur before the end of the seventh century, so that Damnonia comprised both Devon and Cornwall—was a gradual

* *Vict. Hist. of Cornwall*, I, 407.

process; and the accomplishment of it falls naturally into three sections, for in the main there were three waves of missionary immigration, coming respectively from Ireland, from Wales, and from Brittany. Their activity chiefly covered the sixth century, but some of the missionaries arrived earlier, the Bretons apparently being the first in the field, closely followed by the Irish, and the Welsh coming soon after. Furthermore, the Irish evangelized principally the western part of Damnonia, the Welsh the northern, and the Bretons the south, the contribution of the last-named being smaller than those of the others. Thus, in the main, Devonshire may look to Wales as its spiritual mother, and Cornwall to Ireland, though both too are to a considerable degree of Breton descent. Other influences combined with them in the east of Devon, which was affected by the English Christianity of Wessex, as its power spread westwards, so that this stronghold of heathenism was attacked from all four sides.

The earliest Breton missionary—as far as dates can be ascertained—was St German, not the famous Bishop of Auxerre, but he who afterwards became Bishop of the Isle of Man and died about A.D. 474. Soon after the middle of the fifth century he left his own country, and though most of his work was done in North Wales, he first spent some while in Cornwall, where he is said to have met the great St Patrick, who came from Ireland for a brief visit. His sphere of labour was chiefly the country around the valley of the river Tamar, and the churches of St German's, Rame, and Week St German's are reckoned as his foundations. About the close of the century or soon after, there came the three brothers James, Gwethenoc, and Winwaloe, who were Cornish by descent, but Bretons by birth, their parents being recent emigrants. Jacobstow in Cornwall is believed to owe its origin to the first of these; and to the third—Portlemouth in South Devon, and in Cornwall Tremaine, Tresmere, Towednack, Landewednack, and a chapel at Gunwalloe, where is his holy well. To the middle of the sixth century belongs the enterprise of Bishop Padarn, whose memory is perpetuated at North Petherwyn and South Petherwyn

and probably also at Werrington, these places being on the borders of Devon and Cornwall. Another of the same date was Carannog, an Irishman who had crossed over to Brittany, but had migrated again in order to preach the Word in Cornwall, where he became the founder and patron of St Crantock. Other Breton missionaries were Day, whose name is perpetuated at St Day, Melor at Mylor, Ewe at St Ewe, and Sennara (or Azenor, St Budoc's mother) at Zennor.*

The region from which the Irish missionaries came was principally the Province of Leinster, for, the south-eastern corner of Ireland being the part nearest to Cornwall, it was natural that Wexford and Waterford and Ossory should be the chief *provenance* of the immigrants ; and their numbers were largely augmented by political reasons, which led to a considerable migration about the close of the fifth century. It seems that for ages internecine wars had been waging with varying fortunes between the native tribes in that neighbourhood—wars that made it impossible for the defeated parties to continue to inhabit their ancestral territories, so that the survivors were from time to time compelled to seek elsewhere for a *terrain-à-pied*. At that particular time the occupants of the districts of the Hy Bairrche and the Hy Cinnselach, on either side of the river Slaney, found themselves thus unhappily circumstanced, and as a consequence numbers of them crossed the Irish Channel and became settlers in Cornwall ; where, with true Celtic zeal for their holy religion, they not only remained faithful in their new surroundings, but disseminated Christianity among the heathen in the land of their adoption.†

A typical instance was the coming of King Germochus and Abbot Sennan, who brought with them a large party of others, among whom were Achebran of Kilrush in County Clare, and Breaca, Abbess of a religious house that owed its foundation to St Bridget. They landed in Hayle Bay, and established Christian settlements which still perpetuate

* *British Saints*, II, 78 ; III, 60, 172, 200, 332, 467 ; IV, 39, 195, 353 ; *Church Dedications*, I, 462 ; II, 252, 270, 284, 287 ; *Dic. of Christian Biog.*, II, 656.

† *British Saints*, I, 30-33.

their names—St Sennen, the westernmost parish of Cornwall, St Germoe and St Breage near Marazion, and St Keverne in the district of Meneage, south-east of Helston. Other members of the same company were Ia and her brothers Euny and Erc or Erth. They were descended from the royal race of Ulster, though their immediate forebears were settled in Munster, and Erc was Bishop of Slane on the Boyne, Euny also being of episcopal rank. Ia's name and work are commemorated at St Ives, Erc's at St Erth near Hayle, and Euny's at St Uny Lelant, he being also patron of Redruth and Camborne and of chapels at Sancreed and St Just-in-Penwith. With them too was Ruan, who became the founder of Ruan Major, Ruan Minor, Ruan Lanihorne, and a chapel at Polruan opposite Falmouth.*

Or again, there was St Brioc, an Irishman, who left his native land to settle in Wales, and afterwards resolved to move on further in order to carry the Gospel to the Bretons. On his way he sailed into Padstow harbour, and tarried a long while in Cornwall, founding a church close to Wadebridge at St Breocke, which still bears his name; till at last in his old age he succeeded in reaching his original goal, where he died at the age of ninety, about the year 530. A famous contemporary of his was St Budoc, who, though by birth a Breton, was Irish by education, and became the founder of the church of St Budock by Falmouth, and a chapel known as Little St Budock in Constantine a few miles from Penryn, and the church of St Budeaux between Devonport and Saltash. Maybe also the name Bude enshrines the forgotten record of a whilom chapel of this saint, whose death is dated about 500. Two other missionaries of note and influence were St Piran or Kieran and St Buriena. The former belonged to Ossory, being reputed to have been the originator of that bishopric. Passing over to Cornwall, he set up churches at Perran-ar-Worthal near Marazion, at St Perranuthno between Truro and Falmouth, and at Perranzabulo on the north coast, not far from Newquay. Buriena his kinswoman

* *British Saints*, I, 105, 229; II, 459, 470; III, 267; IV, 120, 182; *Church Dedications*, II, 207, 265, 266, 267, 268, 275; *Dic. of Christian Biog.*, I, 333; II, 173, 661; III, 23.

he brought with him from Ireland, where, being a daughter of Crimthan, a chieftain in Munster, she had become Abbess of Killyon in King's County. The church of St Buryan in the Land's End district is a lasting monument of her work in this region.*

Many more there were, such as Indract and Dominica, son and daughter of an Irish prince, whose names live on in Landrake and St Dominic; Feock or Fiacc, Bishop of Sletty, and Just from Leinster, both of them disciples of St Patrick—the one baptized by him and the other ordained—to whom St Feock and St Just-in-Penwith owe their being; Levan from Clonfert and Kilmore, and the Abbot Madron, a native of Muskerry and pupil of Kieran of Saighir or Cape Clear Island, whose work is manifested in the parishes that are called after them; and Columba, son of a King of Leinster, and the widow Creda, daughter of a chieftain of the same province, who have left their marks upon St Columb Major, St Columb Minor, and Creed.†

One of these Irish missionaries, whose sphere of labour in this land, as far as is known, was confined to mid-Devon, was St Disen or Dysibod. A bishop (whose see, according to some, was Dublin), he left Ireland because he was grieved by the prevalence of evil, and made his way to the Continent, but stayed awhile to preach the Gospel to the unbelievers in the Culm valley. The chief scene of his activity was Bradninch, and, though in later times his name was confused with that of St Denys or Dionysius, the proper dedication of Bradninch Church is declared to be St Disen. He afterwards went on to take a share in the evangelizing of Germany, ultimately settling in a monastery of his own founding in the diocese of Mainz, which by its name Disenberg or Disibodenberg bore testimony to his good work; and there he ended a long life in the latter part of the seventh century.‡

* *British Saints*, I, 229, 329, 340; II, 119; *Church Dedications*, II, 272, 286, 289; *Dic. of Christian Biog.*, I, 338, 355, 356; III, 608; IV, 404.

† *British Saints*, II, 164, 185, 351; III, 4, 349, 396; *Church Dedications*, II, 22, 146, 265, 271, 289, 547; *Dic. of Christian Biog.*, II, 504; III, 235, 595, 708, 781.

‡ *Dic. of Christian Biog.*, I, 914; *Church Dedications*, II, 278, 545; *Hist. of Bradninch*, 17; *Devonian Year Book* (1916), 86.

The prince of all the apostles who came to Damnonia from Wales—prince indeed of all those who from any country evangelized that region—was undoubtedly St Petrock, *i.e.*, Little Peter, whose life and ministry covered almost the whole of the sixth century. A native of the south of Monmouthshire, he entered a monastery while yet a youth, and then spent his early manhood in Ireland—probably at Kilnamanach in Wexford—whence, being now nearly forty years of age, he crossed over to Cornwall. Padstow was his landing place, and continued to be his headquarters for thirty years, land being granted to him by King Tewdrig, and also by Constantine, Tewdrig's contemporary or successor. Petrock was a great traveller, and—if we may judge by his dedications—he seems to have devoted his missionary energies more extensively to Devon than to Cornwall. Thus he is claimed as having founded churches in the three ancient metropolises of the former county. Lydford is dedicated to him; and others within range, where traces of his work have been discovered, are Hollacombe, Newton St Petrock, Petrockstowe, Clannaborough, and Zeal Monachorum. Totnes is said to have been one of his foundations, and other Petrock churches in its neighbourhood are Tormohun, Dartmouth, South Brent, Harford, and Buckfast Abbey. Exeter too has a St Petrock's, and within reach of Exeter are Kenton, Petton (a chapelry in Bampton), West Anstey, and Dunkeswell (where there is a St Patrick's Well, probably once St Petrock's Well). Besides these, in the far north are Charles and Parracombe (said to have been formerly Petrock's-combe); and further, it is shrewdly suspected that several other dedications, such as those of Lew Trenchard and Westleigh, are hidden away under the name Peter, the original dedication to the less familiar Celtic saint having given place—in accordance with frequent mediaeval usage—to that of the well known Apostle. But St Petrock travelled much further afield than this, for, when well advanced in years, he went on pilgrimage to Rome and even to Jerusalem, after which he seems to have spent his remaining years in Cornwall. His old age, however, was by no means inglorious, for it was made famous by his founding an important

monastery at Bodmin, and also by his conversion of King Constantine. This was the Constantine who was so roundly abused by Gildas as "the tyrannical whelp of the unclean lioness of Damnonia," for having slain the two sons of Modred, nephew of King Arthur.* In Cornwall his most celebrated work was Bodmin Priory, but he was also patron of the church at that place, as well as of the churches of Padstow, St Petroc Minor (or Little Petherick), Trevalga, and (jointly with St Curig) Egloskerry. His death, which occurred at Bodmin, is dated approximately 594, when he had attained the great age of about 90 years. There his body rested for nearly six centuries; but in 1177 a canon of Bodmin, named Martin, filched it away and conveyed it to the Abbey of S. Maen in Brittany, whose ecclesiastics obstinately refused to deliver it up, until Henry II, being appealed to by the Prior of Bodmin, sent the Justiciary of Brittany with an armed force to demand its restitution. Prior Roger in triumph bore it back to Bodmin, enclosed in its painted ivory case; and, though the saint's remains have long ago vanished, the ancient reliquary is still preserved in his own town, a reminder of the extraordinary and successful activity of this great Celtic missionary, who so richly deserves the title of "the Apostle of Damnonia."†

St Petrock's record makes us marvel at the magnitude of the work that he accomplished, inasmuch as the greater part of Devon and a fair portion of Cornwall seem to have felt his influence. A contrast is afforded in the history of St Brannock, for—so far as we know—he was not a peripatetic, but settled down in one place, and devoted all his time and energies to the work of God in that neighbourhood. Like St Petrock a Welshman, he was the father confessor of Brychan, King of Brecknock, and married his daughter. Then, passing over the sea, he landed at Braunton Burrows, and erected a church—the earliest predecessor of the present parish church of Braunton, in which is an old

* Haddan and Stubbs, I, 49, 120, 157.

† *British Saints*, IV, 94; *Dic. of Christian Biog.*, IV, 326; *Church Dedications*, II, 279; *A Book of the West*, 165; *Devonian Year Book* (1915), 101.

carving of him and his famous cow, whose never-failing milk was credited with miraculous powers. He taught the people of that place religious belief and civil laws, and there he died and was buried in the middle of the sixth century.*

The last of the three most notable missionaries of North Devon is St Nectan of Hartland. This name introduces to us the saintly family of his father Brychan, King of Brecknock, many of whose numerous children and grandchildren figure honourably in the history of Christianity in Damnonia. Among these were Ive, the founder of St Ive, Kenheuder of St Enoder, and Cleder of St Clether and St Cleer, who had also two chapels at Hartland and one at Laneast; and of the ladies of his family were Endelient of St Endellion, Menfre of St Minver, Maben of St Mabyn, Juliana of St Juliot, Wymp or Wenappa of Gwennap, Adwen of St Adwena, and Morwenna of Morwenstow and Marhamchurch and Mariansleigh. Concerning St Nectan himself we know little beyond the fact that he was the founder of Hartland Church, and of Welcombe, which is contiguous to Hartland; and in Devon there were also dedicated in his name the church of Ashcombe and a chapel at Chulmleigh, and in Cornwall churches or chapels at Poundstock, Trevethy (St Cleer), St Winnow, Launceston, and St Newlyn East. His death is assigned to about the middle of the sixth century, and a somewhat uncertain tradition describes him as a bishop, and a still more uncertain one declares that he was slain by pagans in a wood at Hartland.†

One of the earliest Welsh missionaries was Paul, afterwards known as St Pol de Léon, of which he was bishop. The son of a Romanized Briton of Glamorganshire, his classical name was Paulus Aurelianus. In the opening years of the sixth century he went to Damnonia, where he remained only about a couple of years, though long enough to found a church (St Paul's) in Exeter, and Paul church near Penzance, and perhaps also that of Staverton. He then passed over to

* *British Saints*, I, 325; *Church Dedications*, II, 246; *Devonian Year Book* (1915), 93.

† *British Saints*, I, 303; IV, 1; *Church Dedications*, II, 201, 241, 245, 246, 248, 249, 271, 536; *Dic. of Christian Biog.*, IV, 10; *Devonian Year Book* (1915), 88.

Brittany, where he died about A.D. 579, after—it is said—an episcopate of nearly seventy years and a life of a hundred.

Another famous missionary from South Wales was Samson, who is described by the chroniclers as a relative of King Arthur. A monk of Caldey Island, he became Abbot of Llantwit and was consecrated a bishop, and soon after (about A.D. 525) devoted himself to evangelistic work in Cornwall for about twenty years, bringing with him as companions Austell and Mewan. He seems to have settled at Padstow, but on the arrival of Petrock he moved off, and shortly afterwards, accompanied or followed by his two disciples, he quitted Cornwall for Brittany, where he became Bishop of Dol. He was the founder of Golant and South Hill, while Austell and Mewan have left their names to parishes near the former place.*

Among others who came from Wales was Non, a widow from Menevia, and an elder contemporary of St David. Her sister Gwen (of St Wenn) having married Selyt, a duke who dwelt in the south-east of Cornwall, she removed to those parts, and became the patron of Altarnun, Bradstone, Pelynt, and probably Boyton, and her holy well was at Portscatho in the parish of St Gerrans. Another was the widowed queen Helen or Elen, commemorated at Helland and Abbotsham churches and the chapel on Lundy Island. Mention should be made too of Collen, founder of St Colan, who afterwards became Abbot of Glastonbury ; and of Bishop Curig, who, like so many other Welshmen, passed on to Brittany, having established his missions at Egloskerry and Coryton (*i.e.*, Curigtown).†

Meanwhile, Christian influences were spreading westwards from the kingdom of Wessex. So speedily successful had been the mission of Birinus, that in 635, the very year after his landing—probably at Porchester—he had the joy of baptizing King Cynegils, and the conversion of his hitherto pagan subjects followed rapidly. Dorchester-on-Thames was

* *British Saints*, I, 189 ; III, 484 ; IV, 130 ; *Church Dedications*, II, 186, 244, 290, 291 ; *Celtic Christianity*, 93, 97 ; *Dic. of Christian Biog.*, III, 262.

† *British Saints*, II, 157, 192 ; III, 166, 255 ; IV, 22 ; *Church Dedications*, II, 175, 281 ; *Dic. of Christian Biog.*, IV, 51.

assigned to him as his episcopal city, though that was supplanted a generation later by Winchester. Not long after (in 705), the diocese of the West Saxons was divided, Aldhelm, Abbot of Malmesbury, becoming the first Bishop of Sherborne, and having the episcopal oversight of the western part of the realm. This arrangement continued for a couple of centuries, and then (in 909) a further and greater development took place—the episcopate was extended northwards by the foundation of the see of Ramsbury, north-westwards by that of Wells, and westwards by that of Crediton. All this ecclesiastical advance postulates a pushing forward of the boundaries of the kingdom of Wessex, which Bishop Browne thinks had not in the time of Cynegils passed the eastern borders of Wiltshire and Dorset. How soon Devon was entered by the Wessex armies is not known, and historians can only make tentative guesses as to even an approximate date for the conquest of Exeter ; but all are agreed that when the capital of the west was taken, both victors and vanquished had already become Christians ; and, as a consequence, instead of massacring them, the Teutons mercifully allowed the Celtic inhabitants, as brothers in the faith, to continue to reside within the city. A reminiscence of the Celtic occupation was continued to after ages in their church dedications, such as St Kerrian's, St Petrock's, St David's, St Cuthbert's, and probably St Pancras's, and St Paul's (*i.e.*, St Pol de Léon), and one each of the twin titles of Holy Trinity and All Hallows' and St Mary's. But throughout all this time we have no evidence to tell us what the Church of Wessex was doing for the conversion of the men of Devon. It seems probable that the see of Winchester and the see of Sherborne would be active in such a work, but the proof is lacking ; though indeed we do know that Aldhelm, while still at Malmesbury, a few years before his appointment to Sherborne, was exceedingly anxious to win over the Celtic Church to the adoption of Catholic practices, showing his zeal by writing a letter of remonstrance and appeal to King Gerontius and all the priests of God in the realm of Damnonia.*

* *Convers. of Heptarchy*, 41, 45, 49, 65 ; *Historic Towns—Exeter*, 62, 63 ; William of Malmesbury, 30, 148 ; Migne's *Patrologia*, LXXXIX, 87.

CHAPTER II.

EARLY CHRISTIANITY IN CORNWALL AND DEVON.

IT is a remarkable feature in both the political and the ecclesiastical history of the West that there was a lack of organization, an almost entire absence of centralization, in Church and State. We light upon the names of Damnonian kings, but not of royal cities or palaces, the only exception being the legendary connection of King Arthur with Tintagel; and likewise with regard to episcopacy, the normal condition seems to have been that a bishop had no delimited diocese and no clearly defined see. Other Celtic missions generally shared this characteristic, though even there we have as recognised Church centres such places as York and London and Caerleon, St David's and Bangor and Llandaff, Iona and Whithern and Lindisfarne. What a contrast is presented by the statesmanlike arrangement or scheme of Gregory the Great, who at once instructed St Augustine to found archbishoprics at London and York, each with twelve suffragan sees; and of Archbishop Theodore, whose organizing skill as an administrator raised the number of English bishoprics from seven to seventeen, each bishop having a fixed see and a well defined diocese. But in Devon and Cornwall we experience the greatest difficulty in localizing the episcopate, in identifying dioceses, in recognising any cathedral where the bishop's throne might have been placed. The two British bishops—accepted as Damnonian by Bishop Browne* —who were associated with Wini of Winchester in the consecration of Chad in 664, are left title-less by Bede,† merely because they were not known by the name of any see; and it was only gradually and at a later date that such description

* *Convers. of Heptarchy*, 123.
† *Eccles. Hist.*, III, 28.

would be possible. Perhaps one early exception is Branwallader, who—not very confidently indeed—has been claimed as a British Bishop of Exeter. Bishop Grandisson, who made a special effort to conserve the ancient records of the early saints of his diocese, describes him as a bishop, and son of a certain King Kenen; and succeeding historians tell us that his tomb was to be seen at Branscombe, not far from Axminster, though some of his relics had been translated to Milton in Dorset by King Athelstan.*

As to Cornwall, matters are somewhat less obscure, for the haziness of outline has to some degree been dispelled by the researches of Canon Thomas Taylor, Vicar of St Just-in-Penwith, who has given to the world the results of his investigations in *The Celtic Christianity of Cornwall*. It is necessary to keep in mind the Celtic peculiarity as regards Church government and organization, namely, that in early times there were no diocesan or territorial bishops, but the exercise of episcopal functions was usually vested in the head of a monastery. In Ireland either the episcopate was merged in the office of the hereditary coarbs, the same official being both head of the monastery and also bishop of the faithful in the district; or else, the coarb was only in priest's Orders—as was the case with St Columba—and there was a bishop resident in the monastery and subordinate to the coarb.† In the Irish branch of the Celtic Church the episcopate was degraded, but elsewhere it was not so; and in Cornwall it seems that, though the custom obtained of having an abbot-bishop, the second title was not over-shadowed by the first. Still, a bishop who owed his permanently local position to the fact that he was head of a monastery, would naturally appear as a less prominent and important person than would a diocesan bishop; and doubtless such a circumstance very largely accounts for the uncertainty that prevails concerning the episcopate in the West, and the difficulty in identifying sees and their occupants.

History, however, connects episcopacy with two towns in Cornwall, namely, Bodmin and St German's, and to these

* *Devonian Year Book* (1915), 103.

† *Church of Ireland*, Olden, 111, 116.

should probably be added a third—St Gerrans. If we take count of the ancient inheritance of the see of Exeter in Cornwall, we notice that it consisted mainly of four great tracts of land, which were situated near four centres—Bodmin, St German's, Launceston, and St Gerrans; and from *Domesday Book* we learn the composition and extent of these four domains. The largest comprised the manors of Pawton, Burneir, and Lanherne, which are grouped together in the neighbourhood of Bodmin. They were reckoned as 47 hides, and included the whole or parts of the parishes of Egloshayle, St Breocke, St Issey, Little Petherick, Padstow, St Merryn, St Ervan, St Eval, and St Mawgan. There is ample tradition to support the claim of Bodmin to have been an ancient see, and it would be natural that its episcopal estates should descend to the Bishops of Exeter. There can be no question as to St German's having been the seat of a bishopric, and the Survey declares that Bishop Leofric owned 24 hides of land there. We have no evidence in favour of counting Launceston as a see town, and, indeed, we know that Leofric's manor of 11 hides at Lawhitton, close by, was a special royal gift. But it is different with the great estate of 24 hides about the estuary of the Fal—the manors of Trewell and Treluswell, comprising the parishes of Ruan Lanihorne, Philleigh, St Gerrans, St Just-in-Roseland, St Feock, Mylor, St Gluvias, St Budock, and St Mabe; for in the parish of St Gerrans are the remains of Dingerein Castle, which may be identified with Dinnurrin; and it was in Dinnurrin Monastery that Kenstec held episcopal rank in the ninth century.*

The perpetuation of Kenstec's name is due to the preservation of his profession of submission to Ceolnoth, who was Archbishop of Canterbury from 833 till 870; and he describes himself as "ad episcopalem sedem in gente Cornubia in monasterio, quod lingua Brettonum appellatur Dinnurrin, electus." The incident is one of importance, for not only is it, with the exception of the assisting of the two Damnonian bishops at the consecration of Chad, the first recorded example of the establishment of friendly relations between the Church

* *Celtic Christianity*, 70-89.

of the east and the Church of the west ; but it testifies to the growing influence of Canterbury, and to the readiness of the ecclesiastical authorities of Cornwall to abandon their isolation and attitude of independence, and to acknowledge the primacy of the successors of Augustine. "I am ready," he declares, "to become for all the term of my transitory life the obedient poor servant and suppliant client of the Dorovernian Church and of thee and thy successors."*

Thus it would appear that while we can discover little concerning localized and successive episcopacy in Devon, save for a faint indication of such at Exeter, in Cornwall there emerge three bishoprics, each connected with a monastery, at St German's and Bodmin and St Gerrans. We may naturally infer that bishops would rule at these contemporaneously, and would between them perform such episcopal functions as were required for the whole county ; but the silence of later history concerning Bodmin and St Gerrans leads us to infer that the succession had died out at those two places long before the transference of the see of St German's to Crediton.

There is but little to be said of him, but, in treating of western episcopacy, we must not altogether pass over St Rumon, who was widely venerated of old times, and not only figures as patron of Romansleigh, but was also chosen by Earl Ordgar in 961 as patron of his newly founded abbey at Tavistock. All that can be predicated of him is that he was a local bishop, apparently early in the ninth century or before, though his name cannot be connected more intimately with any particular place or district. Tavistock Abbey rose to great renown and for long was the wealthiest of all the religious houses in the two western counties, and consequently Rumon would be well known in the west as a famous saint ; but in the twelfth century William of Malmesbury stated plainly that all knowledge of him and his work had long ago perished.†

After this we find ourselves on sure ground, for there

* *Celtic Christianity*, 61, 64, 79, 87 ; Haddan and Stubbs, I, 674 ; *Trans. of Devon. Assoc.*, XLII, 485.

† *Devonian Year Book* (1915), 104.

can be no possible hesitation in accepting the historical character of the personality and the position of Asser, who was the intimate friend and literary assistant and biographer of King Alfred. He himself narrates that his royal patron granted to him Exeter and all the diocese belonging to him, both in Devon and in Cornwall (sequentis temporis successu ex improviso dedit mihi Exanceastre cum omni parochia quae ad se pertinebat in Saxonia et in Cornubia). The natural interpretation of this is that Alfred made him bishop of all his domain in the two western counties, with his head-quarters at Exeter. A few years afterwards (A.D. 900) Asser succeeded to the bishopric of Sherborne, holding it till his death nine years later ; and from the lack of evidence to the contrary we may infer that he continued to rule over his earlier diocese during the same time.*

Asser is not to be claimed as an Englishman—not yet had come the time for an Anglo-Saxon prelate to rule over this branch of the British Church—for he was a Welshman, a relative of Nobis, Bishop of St David's, and " brought up, educated, tonsured, and ordained " in that neighbourhood.† But soon the Celtic element in high quarters of the Church in the west was to disappear, Conan, bishop of St German's, whose death is placed in A.D. 950, being the last prelate of that race. He however was not the only diocesan in the west, for on the death of Asser King Edward the Elder and Archbishop Plegmund had, as one portion of a great Church extension scheme, split off Devonshire from the jurisdiction of the see of Sherborne, and had formed it into a new diocese, Eadwulf being enthroned as its first bishop at Crediton. To him were transferred the three Cornish estates of Polltun, Caellwic or Caelling, and Landwithan, which Egbert had conferred on the Bishop of Sherborne, to be under the authority of the people of Devon, " because they (the Cornish) had formerly been disobedient, without awe of the West Saxons."‡

Crediton enjoyed a world-wide ecclesiastical fame as

* *Asser's Alfred*, 68, 321.
† *Asser's Alfred*, lxxi, 64.
‡ *Anecdota Oxoniensia*, 18, 106.

the birthplace of Winfrid, or Boniface, Apostle of Germany, the greatest and the most successful of all the missionaries—and a number of them were English—who evangelized the lower part of the basin of the Rhine and the adjoining lands. Winfrid's parents were persons of good position, who were probably connected with the royal families of both Wessex and Kent; and the boy, who was born at Crediton in 680 or the year before, having from early childhood evinced an earnest desire to devote himself to the religious life, was sent to Exeter, when the opposition of his father had at last been overcome, to be educated in a monastery in the city. The abbot was one Wolfard, whose name shows that there was an English element in the British capital. But the inference that Wolfard's presence there is proof that Exeter had already passed under the sway of Wessex is apparently a mistaken one; for Aldhelm's epistle to King Geraint or Gerontius and the priests of his realm, which was posterior to the date of Winfrid's sojourn in Exeter, seems to indicate that Damnonia was still an independent Celtic kingdom. From Exeter he passed on to the more important but unidentified monastery of Nutscelle near Winchester; and later he sacrificed all his prospects of rising to high office in England by leaving his native land—never again to return, when once he had gained a real foothold on foreign soil—and gave up his remaining thirty-seven years to the fulfilment of his chief ambition, namely, the conversion of the heathen Teutonic races. To us he is known as St Boniface—the name that was formally conferred on him by Pope Gregory II, when he consecrated him a bishop in 722 or 723; and at a later date he became Archbishop of Mainz, with which place his name is always associated, though he occupied that see only eleven years, and had actually resigned it shortly before his death. On the eve of Whitsunday in the year 755 he was martyred with his whole party of over fifty persons by a band of armed pagans at Dockum, in the north-east of the modern kingdom of Holland, leaving to Crediton a proud heritage of undying glory for having produced such a son, and to Christian Devon a never failing source of inspiration for missionary zeal and devotion. This the recent

restorers of Exeter Cathedral were fain to emphasize by carving a representation of his martyrdom on one of the panels of the nave pulpit, in close proximity to the site of the monastery in which he had received his early education.*

Why that little country town of Crediton, renowned though it was in the pages of Church history, was preferred to the ancient metropolis of Exeter, only seven miles distant, has never been revealed. Maybe it was possessed of a church that was considered more fitted for so high a dignity; or perhaps there were local difficulties connected with patronage or property, which barred the way at Exeter. Be that as it may, a line of ten English bishops ruled at Crediton, covering a period of nearly a century and a half; until in the time of Norman influence the practical convenience of having the bishop's residence at the centre of life and activity, and the still more practical and cogent argument that at that period of Danish invasions the strongly fortified city was a safer place than the small unwalled town, induced Edward the Confessor to consent to the translation of the see to Exeter.

Of the ten Crediton bishops the majority are to be reckoned with them that "have no memorial, who are perished as though they had never been"—their names indeed have been preserved, but naught, or almost naught, of their history. Of the first, Eadwulf (909-934), nothing is known personally, except the already mentioned transference to him by Edward the Elder of the three Cornish estates of Polltun, Caellwic or Caelling, and Landwithan, which had been granted to the see of Sherborne by King Egbert a century before (813). The first and the third of these are undoubtedly Pawton in St Breocke and Lawhitton near Launceston. The other may probably be identified with Kelly, a part of the manor of Burneir in Egloshayle (not with Callington, which apparently was never Church property). The object of bestowing these estates on the Bishop of Crediton is defined as being "that from them he might visit the Cornish people in order to extirpate their errors. For in times past, as far as possible, they resisted the truth, and were not obedient to the apostolical

* *Boniface of Crediton*, 1, 7, 9, 37, 257, 274; *Dic. of Christian Biog.*, I, 324.

decrees." Such work would seem an intrusion upon the jurisdiction of the Cornish bishops, but we must bear in mind that as yet they were not exactly territorial diocesans, and in any case those particular domains would be regarded as without their rule. We may infer, however, that the position was felt to be anomalous, for not long after (perhaps on the death of Bishop Aethelgar of Crediton in 953), the properties were conferred on Daniel at his consecration as a Cornish bishop.*

Aethelgar was the second in the Crediton succession, and figures as a witness in a charter of King Athelstan. Aelfweald I (953-972) was recommended to King Edred for the post by Dunstan, at that time Abbot of Glastonbury, and received his appointment from him. Sideman (973-977), formerly an abbot in Exeter, died while attending a synod at Kyrlington in Oxfordshire, and was buried at Abingdon. Aelfric (977-988) was promoted from the abbacy of Malmesbury, and left proofs of his learning in hagiologies and English translations of Latin works. Aelfweald II or Aelfweald III witnessed a couple of charters of King Ethelred II, describing himself as "Archimandrite of the Church of Crediton." He was highly connected, being a brother of Eadgyfu, who was the wife of Earl Ordulf (builder of Tavistock Abbey), and in his will he left legacies to both of them.† Eadnoth (1012-1027) is nothing more than a bare name. All these, with the exception of Sideman, are said to have been interred in the Cathedral at Crediton; and though no vestige of the Saxon edifice can now be identified, the building doubtless occupied the same site as the present parish church. When a recent extensive restoration was carried out, some very ancient masonry was laid bare, whose appearance suggested an archway leading to a crypt; but unfortunately no further investigation was made, and that masonry is now hidden from sight.‡

The ninth Bishop of Crediton was a man of power and influence—not so much in the Church as in the State, in which he and Earl Godwin appear as the king-makers of

* *Anglo-Saxon Bishops*, etc., 96.
† *Anecdota Oxoniensia*, 23, 125.
‡ *Anglo-Saxon Bishops*, etc., 96-99.

the age. A monk of St Swithun's at Winchester, and then head of Tavistock Abbey, Lyfing accompanied King Cnut on his pilgrimage to Rome; and while that monarch extended his return journey by a visit to Denmark, he sent Lyfing home to convey to the English people his famous letter, in which he promised to reform his life and to rule with justice and clemency. Soon after his arrival he was appointed Bishop of Crediton, and occupied the see for nineteen years (1027-1046). He also obtained from the King a promise that on the decease of his uncle Burhweald he should succeed him as Bishop of St German's—an arrangement which took effect in due course; and, further, from King Harold Harefoot he received the see of Worcester; so that here, we should imagine, was a notable instance of scandalous plurality, for it would be impossible for any one prelate to tend satisfactorily flocks so far remote from each other. He was famous, indeed, for eloquence, and is described as a man of prudence and capacity; but he would seem to have been ambitious, grasping, and a time-serving diplomatist, rather than a devoted ecclesiastic. Nor can he be considered to be quit of a charge of simony, for after Harthacnut had for political reasons deprived him of the see of Worcester, he soon regained his bishopric by a skilful expenditure of money. Having had a hand in setting both Harthacnut and Harold Harefoot on their thrones, he took a leading part in making Edward the Confessor King of England, a result which was accomplished, says Florence of Worcester, "chiefly by the exertions of Earl Godwin and Lyfing, Bishop of Worcester." At his death his body was taken to Tavistock, to be laid to rest in the abbey, of which he had been a generous benefactor.*

Meanwhile the Church in Cornwall had been governed by its own bishops, the chief see being that of St German's, though Bodmin, on account of the importance of its monastery, figures prominently too. Of bishops of St German's we have the names of ten, all of whom, except the first, seem to have been of English stock. Leland the antiquary, who visited

* *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, XXXIII, 382; *Abbots of Tavistock*, 23-27; *Reg. Sacrum Angl.*, 18, 19.

Cornwall in the time of Henry VIII, wrote in his *Itinerary* of St German's :—" Beside the high altar of the same Priory on the right side is a tomb in the wall with an image of a bishop, and over the tomb eleven bishops painted with their names and verses, as token of so many bishops buried there, or that there had been so many bishops of Cornwall that had their seats there." It is greatly to be wished that Leland had preserved their names, but, with the exception of the last two, none of them figures in history further than acting as a witness of royal charters or of the manumission of serfs, or as granting to serfs their freedom.

The earliest of them is Conan, to whom Athelstan is said to have committed the ecclesiastical oversight of the west as far as the river Tamar, and who was a signatory of charters of that monarch from 931 onwards. He is followed by Aethelgeard and Comoere and Wulfsige, whose names have been inserted in the margin of the ninth century *Bodmin Gospels* among the lengthy list of manumissions, the last-named being appointed by King Edgar. A Daniel too is mentioned between Aethelgeard and Comoere, a nominee of King Edred, who gave endowment of lands to the see. Then succeeded Bishops Ealdred and Aethelred, witnesses of charters, each being described as " Cornubiensis Ecclesiae Episcopus," to the former of whom also King Ethelred II in 994 granted rights and liberties for himself and his successors. Then comes Burhweald or Brihtwold, who signs as early as 1016, and survived till 1043—for, according to Florence of Worcester, it was with the consent of King Edward the Confessor that his nephew Lyfing of Crediton succeeded him at St German's. From King Cnut in 1018 he received a grant of lands, situated—if the identification be correct—in the parishes of Landulph and Landrake. The last two bishops, Lyfing and Leofric, were both pluralists, for they held at the same time also the see of Crediton ; but in 1050 the bishoprics of Crediton and St German's were united in one, and Bishop Leofric and his successors henceforth ruled as bishops of the newly founded see of Exeter.*

* Haddan and Stubbs, I, 675-688 ; *Anglo-Saxon Bishops*, etc., 102-103.

A very important part of the history of early Christianity in Devon and Cornwall is bound up with the Religious Houses. Of course the planting of the Faith had to be done by missionaries, who travelled from place to place, preaching and baptizing; but until the parochial system was established, the Church had to depend very largely on the agency of religious communities for the performance of ministerial and pastoral duties. In other parts of the country the monastic system owed its introduction to St Augustine, and the movement received great encouragement from the zeal of Benedict Biscop and the organizing genius of Archbishop Theodore, and later was extensively promoted by the strenuous efforts of St Dunstan. But in the west there already existed a monasticism that was independent of Canterbury and of Rome, of separate origin and of different type, and which only gradually and in course of long time became assimilated to the English model. A hint as to the wide prevalence of this system in the west is afforded by the frequent occurrence of the Celtic prefix 'lan' (monastery) attached to very many place-names. Besides a large number of manors, we have such parishes as Landcross and Landkey, Landscove and Langtree in Devon, and in Cornwall Landrake and Landulph, Lansallos and Lanteglos, Lanhydrock and Landewednack, and others, in all of which the Church's work must have been done in ancient times, not by a parochial incumbent, but by little communities of clergymen. If appearances seem to indicate that the monastic system was general in Cornwall and only exceptional in Devon, we must bear in mind that the old *régime* was conserved much longer in the independent regions of the west; whereas Saxon influences made themselves felt much earlier in the east, and before them ancient ecclesiastical arrangements had to give way. Consequently, while many traces of Celtic Church organization are to be discovered in the former, in the latter the search is often futile, and the known Religious Houses of the earlier foundation are few indeed, those of Saxon date being not many more. We treat first of those in Devonshire.

Proof of the early existence of Exeter Abbey comes from

the biography of St Boniface or Winfrid of Crediton, who (as already mentioned) was sent in early boyhood to a monastery in that city to be brought up under Wolfard, the Abbot. As Boniface was born in 679 or the following year, the House must have been established some while before the end of the seventh century. There is mention of this being refounded, or another one being founded, by King Ethelred I about the year 868. Of King Athelstan it is recorded that "he gave command that here in Exeter there should be built a monastery to the honour of God and of the heavenly Queen, Holy Mary, mother of Christ, and of St Peter, chief of the Apostles—for he had chosen him as his patron saint." Again, Florence of Worcester informs us that King Edgar placed a colony of monks at Exeter, and set over them as Abbot Sideman, who a few years later was consecrated to Crediton. These accounts seem a little confusing, or even conflicting, but at any rate they all testify to the existence of at least one monastery at Exeter in the Anglo-Saxon period. This must have shared the fate of the rest of Exeter, when in 1003 it was captured by the Danes under the leadership of the mighty Sweyn, "who entirely ruined the town, and there took much booty." But better days followed, for Cnut endowed and almost entirely rebuilt the minster in 1019, and Exeter soon regained its former affluence and stability. When Leofric came as bishop in 1050, he made room for his secular canons by ousting from their old home the regulars, who according to the generally accepted account were monks, though William of Malmesbury speaks of them as nuns. Some portions of the red stone fabric of their Saxon church may yet be seen incorporated in the present cathedral, and it would seem that it approximately occupied the site of the existing Lady Chapel, though differently orientated, so that the ground-plans of the two would not coincide.*

The two most venerable monastic foundations that we know to have existed in Devon, the only two that we can place in Celtic times, are Buckfast and Exeter; and though

* *Anglo-Saxon Chron.*, A.D. 1003; Dugdale's *Monast.*, II, 529; *Hist. of Exeter*, Oliver, 16-18; Oliver's *Bishops*, 173; *Historic Towns—Exeter*, 29; *Boniface of Crediton*, 1, 7.

the latter can prove a higher antiquity, if appeal to documentary evidence is to be decisive, it seems probable that the ancestry of the former is really the older. For it is maintained with some show of probability that Buckfast Abbey owed its first foundation to St Petrock in the sixth century, who is said to have penetrated thus far up the Dart valley towards Dartmoor in his evangelizing of this region. The monks claimed to have received from King Cnut the grant of the manor of Zeal Monachorum, though it must be confessed that their first mention on the pages of history is when "Aelfwine, Abbot of Buckfast," appended his signature as witness to a charter of about 1040 A.D. It is certain, however, that when the Domesday Survey was taken, the Abbey possessed large estates, for it is credited with holding these thirteen manors :—Bulfestra (Buckfastleigh), Petrocestoua (Petrockstowe), Aissa (Ash in Petrockstowe), Limae (Zeal Monachorum), Dona (Down St Mary), Trisma (Trusham), Haiserstona (Sherewood in Ashburton), Aissa (Abbot's Ash in Holbeton), Hetfelt (Heathfield in Aveton Giffard), Notona (Norton in Churchstow), Chereforda (Charford in South Brent), and two others called Brenta (South Brent). Doubtless Buckfast would adopt the Benedictine Rule as the Saxon influence spread westwards, but all this is matter of conjecture only.*

That there was an important monastery at Crediton in Saxon times is certain, though we cannot be sure of its nature or constitution. It seems to have originated during the first half of the eighth century, there being a charter (dated 739) of Aethelhard, King of Wessex, by which he grants to Forthhere, Bishop of Sherborne, some land at Creedy whereon to build a monastery (aliquam terram ad construendum monasterium). The territory was of immense area—it is stated to be twenty hides—for it comprised the whole or parts of ten or twelve parishes, and the boundaries included Creedy Bridge and the rivers Exe, Yeo, and Teign. A couple of centuries later, the place having now become an episcopal see, the holding was augmented by a gift from King Athelstan of three hides at Sandford, which he bestowed on Eadwulf,

* *Monast. Exon.*, 371 ; *Trans. of Devon. Assoc.*, XXVIII, 412.

the first Bishop, to be inalienably held by the brethren of "the aforesaid monastery" (A.D. 933); and early in the next century Bishop Aelfweald II mentions the giving of land at the same place to "the monastery at Crediton." About a hundred years afterwards it is recorded that Bishop William Warelwast granted and confirmed to the Church of Crediton and its canons such rights in the goods and provostship of the Church as they had enjoyed in the time of his predecessor, from which it is inferred that its foundation as a collegiate church is to be ascribed to himself (or possibly to Bishop Osbern).*

The collegiate body consisted of thirty-six members, there being eighteen canons, each of whom had his vicar, though the twelfth century saw the reduction to twelve of either rank. The head of the chapter was the precentor, and the canons ranking next to him were the treasurer and the dean, the latter acting as vicar of the parish. For their support there were assigned the appropriations of the churches of Lelant, Coleridge, and Ashreigney, together with other property; but, although the revenue was a generous one, they did not succeed in keeping the fabric of their noble church in repair, and its condition in the fifteenth century and early sixteenth was such that extensive rebuilding was necessary to save it from absolute ruin.†

The fame of Crediton has lasted; and that there were many other churches served by communities of priests, whose annals have long ago perished, is manifest from casual certificates of the manumissions of serfs—acts which were performed in the presence of witnesses, who in many cases were priests. In this way we gather from entries in the *Leofric Missal* that about A.D. 970 there were communities of priests at Okehampton, Coryton, Bradstone, and Bridgerule. The mention of these several instances in so brief and fragmentary a record is certainly suggestive of many more places where reference might have been made to "all the priests of the convent there."‡

* *Anecdota Oxoniensia*, I, 3, 5, 29.
† *Monast. Exon.*, 75; *Devon Notes and Queries*, VII, 184.
‡ *Leofric Missal*, lix.

The smaller Plympton, with its present population of only four thousand, can show a much more extended history than the neighbouring great metropolis of Plymouth. For Plymouth, under the name of Sutton, first emerges from uncertain tradition in the pages of *Domesday*, where it figures as an entirely insignificant place. But in 1086 Plympton was already ancient and important, and at that time the canons of the priory there held two hides of land of Plympton manor under the King. Furthermore, when the manor of Sutton was granted by the Crown to the Valletorts, they gave part of it to Plympton Priory, as the leading ecclesiastical authority in that district. But the establishment could claim a greater antiquity than that ; for scholars accept as probably genuine a charter of 904, in which King Edward the Elder grants to Asser, Bishop of Sherborne, and his convent twelve manors in Somerset in exchange for the monastery of Plympton. Thus Plympton appears to have been a foundation of the ninth century at latest. Early in the twelfth century the corporation is spoken of as consisting of a dean and four canons, which seems to indicate that at that time it was not a priory but a collegiate church. Anyhow, on the score that the brethren were guilty of transgressing the Church's laws by having wives, Bishop William Warelwast in 1121 removed them to Bosham Collegiate Church in Sussex, and in their room introduced at Plympton a band of Austin Canons ; and by him and other benefactors this Priory of St Peter and St Paul was weathily endowed. Among its noteworthy assets were the ownership of St Nicholas's Island (now Drake's Island) in Plymouth Sound ; the possession of the parish church of Plympton St Mary, built within the conventual precincts, and consecrated by Bishop Stapeldon in 1311 ; the right of appointing the Rural Dean of Plympton Deanery ; and a heriot of £3 (afterwards increased to £4), granted by the founder with the consent of his Chapter, on the death or removal of each prebendary of Exeter Cathedral.*

The little Benedictine Priory of Pilton by Barnstaple was a dependency of Malmesbury Abbey in Wiltshire, and

* *Hist. of Devon.*, Worth, 233 ; *Asser's Alfred*, lxvi.

continued to keep in such close touch with the mother-house that it is said to have drawn thence most of its inmates, and three of its priors became abbots there. Its claim to be an Athelstan foundation is manifested upon its corporate seal, which bears on one side a figure of Blessed Mary (its Patron Saint) with the legend, "Virgo, roga pro me, totum semper tibi do me," and on the reverse, one of that monarch, who declares, "Hoc Athelstanus ago quod presens signat imago." The claim must be considered a good one, for though actual historical proof is lacking, so ancient and so general is the tradition that it can hardly be set aside.*

The greatest and grandest of all the monastic establishments in the two western counties was the Benedictine Abbey of Tavistock. It owed its origin to members of one of the most influential families in that part of England, for Ordgar, who is credited with the actual founding in 961, was Earl of Devon, and he was succeeded by his son Ordulf, who completed the work twenty years later, dedicating it to St Mary and St Rumon.

The story that tells how this family became connected with the Royal House of England is not only one of curious interest, but is also of important bearing on the rise of Tavistock Abbey. It happened that the young and profligate King Edgar heard reports of the exceeding beauty of Elfrida (Aelfthryth), the girlish daughter of Ordgar; so he sent his confidential adviser Aethelwold on a private mission, that he might view the lady with the object of arranging a match, if her charms should prove to be equal to her fame. Aethelwold therefore visited her home, without divulging to her or to her parents the reason for his coming; and he found her so beautiful that he fell in love with her himself. On his return he reported that her appearance was not more than ordinary, and that she was certainly not such as a king should wed; and thus he succeeded in deceiving Edgar, and also he gained Elfrida as his own bride. But in course of time rumour whispered in the King's ears that he had been hoodwinked; so he arranged a personal visit to the couple in their home (at Harewood by the Tamar in the parish of Calstock, according

* *Monast. Exon.*, 244.

to later writers) ; whereupon Aethelwold in great alarm confessed to his wife his deceit, and begged her to shield him by concealing her good looks. She, however, piqued by the trick that had been played upon her, on the contrary made herself as attractive as possible, and succeeded in captivating the young monarch, who determined to make her his wife. Accordingly a hunting party was arranged, opportunity was found of putting Aethelwold out of the way, and two years later Elfrida became Queen of England.

Such is the tale that is told by William of Malmesbury, a tale that is thought by some to be history, by others to be romance. Freeman has discussed it in his *Historical Essays* (vol. I, 15), and accepts it as having at least some truth in it. Anyhow, the characters are all thoroughly historical, as well as the marriage of Elfrida and Aethelwold, Earl of East Anglia ; the death of the latter in 962 ; and the marriage of Edgar and Elfrida in 964. Ordgar was certainly Earl of Devon, signing himself as " Ordgar dux " in a number of charters between 965 and 968, and was owner of many estates in Devon, and, dying in 971, was buried (probably) at Exeter. His wife, who was of royal birth, has been identified with Eadgyfu, who " manumitted Leofrun at Coryton for Ordgar "* ; and his daughter Elfrida, who is credited with responsibility for the murder of her young step-son King Edward at Corfe Castle, lived until about 1002, when her own son Ethelred II had been twenty-three years King of England.

Ordulf, who undoubtedly had the chief share in founding Tavistock Abbey, was a man of remarkable size and strength, marvellous tales being told of his prowess and accomplishments. He survived his sister some years, and therefore would naturally take the lead in rebuilding the monastery after its destruction by the Danes in 997, when they ravaged all the country from the mouth of the Tamar up to Lydford. Here comes in the importance of the Elfrida episode, for Ethelred, as nephew of Ordulf, interested himself in the place where his grandmother and his uncle were buried, and under his patronage the Abbey soon regained its affluence

* *Leofric Missal*, lix.

and prosperity; and as a consequence the *Domesday* returns show that this was by far the wealthiest as regards both money and lands of the Religious Houses in the country, holding sixteen manors in Devon and six in Cornwall and two in Dorset, with an annual income of £71 10s. 7d. (about £2,940 in modern value).*

In its early days Tavistock Abbey gave to the English Church two bishops of eminence, who had both ruled there as abbots, *viz.*, Lyfing, who (as already mentioned) was promoted to the see of Crediton, adding thereto also the sees of St German's and Worcester, and Aldred, who as Archbishop of York crowned both Harold and William the Conqueror.

Hartland is at the present time very much out of sight and out of mind, and must have been much more so in Norman days; for, far away in the extreme north-west corner of Devon, by the shores of the ocean with its great rugged cliffs, the inmates of a monastery would surely be "by the world forgot." But the manor by the Promontory of Hercules was by no means uninhabited; indeed, in *Domesday* it is shown to have had a larger population than any other manor in North Devon—30 serfs, 60 villeins, and 45 bordars; and the site chosen for the Religious was a lovely flat-bottomed valley, well watered, and securely sheltered from the northern blasts. On the hill dominating it on the south, with its grand tower—the most impressive in the county—is set Hartland Church, whose first predecessor is said to have been dedicated to St Nectan by Gytha, sister of Sweyn and mother of King Harold, as a thank-offering for the preservation of Earl Godwin her husband from shipwreck; and there in the valley below she is believed too to have founded a House of secular canons.†

There are three other Devonshire churches, included by Dr Oliver under his widely comprehensive designation of "monastic," which are possibly ancient foundations.

* *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, I, 167; XVI, 365; XLII, 242; *Trans. of Devon. Assoc.*, XLVI, 119; XLVII, 372; *Abbots of Tavistock*, 8, 10, 18, 21, 56; *Anglo-Saxon Chron.*, A.D. 997.

† *Monast. Exon.*, 205.

These are Axminster, which he describes as Prebendal, and Chulmleigh and Tiverton, entitled by him Collegiate. King Athelstan is said to have provided an endowment at Axminster for seven priests, to offer prayer for seven earls who were slain in battle against Danish invaders. In disturbed times the proper authorities omitted to fill vacancies as they occurred, so that his arrangement fell into abeyance—thus accounting for the silence of *Domesday*; but afterwards his scheme was revived, and though it partiallv lapsed again, there were still two prebends held by canons in York Minster up to the time of the Dissolution.* How old was the collegiate character of Chulmleigh Church we cannot discover, but the earliest historical proof belongs to the middle of the thirteenth century. At first we find mention of six prebendaries, but ere long these were reduced to five in addition to the rector; and from the inequality of their stipends it looks as if he resided and performed the duties, their offices being sinecures. In modern times it became customary for the rector to hold all, until in 1840 by Act of Parliament the benefice became simply parochial by the merging of the five prebends in the rectory.† The latest historian of Tiverton declares that "from the earliest times known the Church of Tiverton was collegiate." His statement is wisely indefinite, for it has not been found possible to trace the commencement of the arrangement whereby the revenue was divided between four rectors, whose portions bore the titles of Clare, Pitt, Priors, and Tidcombe. There seems, however, to have been no inter-dependence among them, nor did they form a community or a college, so that the designation of "collegiate" is really a misnomer; nor indeed can either Tiverton or Chulmleigh, or Axminster, be rightly included under the heading of "monastic." ‡

From the nature of the case traces of Celtic Christianity are much more evident in Cornwall than in Devon in any historical investigation; for Saxon supremacy began later

* *Monast. Exon.*, 317.
† *Monast. Exon.*, 291; *Trans. of Devon. Assoc.*, XXXIX, 208.
‡ *Monast. Exon.*, 315; *Ch. of St. Peter, Tiverton*, 10, 11.

and was but short-lived there, and had not time to make much impress on the religion of the county. Consequently, while there are a number of monasteries of the older foundation to include in our review, it is but a meagre Church history that can be compiled about conditions during the Saxon rule west of the Tamar. That review is chiefly concerned with the three great Religious Houses at St German's, Bodmin, and Launceston.

The origin of St German's Priory is attributed to the Breton St German, who was, according to such testimony as we have, the earliest Christian missionary in Cornwall. There is no early evidence or tradition connecting the place with his contemporary and greater namesake of Auxerre; but long afterwards St German's claimed the latter as its patron saint, and Prior John Prechour and his brethren were complimented when in 1361 the Abbot and Convent of St German's at Auxerre presented to them the small bone of an arm of their St German; and that compliment was emphasized by Bishop Grandisson, who granted an indulgence of forty days to all penitents making a pilgrimage to the priory church on his feast day.* Haddan and Stubbs declare that this priory was "clearly of early British origin," and though historical proof of this is wanting, *Domesday Book* informs us that in the days of Edward the Confessor Bishop Leofric had a manor there, and that the canons of St German's had one of equal size—the twenty-four hides that had belonged to the former having apparently been shared with the latter. Before the Norman Conquest the church was served by secular canons, but Leofric established canons regular in their place, and he and his successors as Bishops of Exeter enjoyed the revenues of the manor there.†

Another primeval Religious House was Bodmin, which owed its foundation to St Petrock himself, who enlarged the dwelling that had sheltered St Guron or Goran the hermit, and made it a home for himself and three brethren. How long St Petrock's served as the see of abbot-bishop

* *Register*, 1226.

† *Monast. Exon.*, 1; Haddan and Stubbs, I, 701; *Celtic Christianity*, 74, 87, 117.

we know not, but, phoenix-like, it revived from its ashes after being destroyed by the Danes at the close of the tenth century, and before the time of *Domesday* the church had become collegiate. The Survey gives us some idea of its importance by recounting the eighteen manors that it then possessed, besides ten others of which it had been despoiled. Later—one account says through the agency of Bishop William Warelwast—it was converted into a priory of Augustinian canons.*

The one note of interest connected with its earlier history is concerned with the *Bodmin Gospels*, a ninth century manuscript, now in the British Museum. The historical importance of the book lies in the series of forty-seven manumissions, which have been added in the margins by later hands. Not only do these mention the names of several kings—Edmund the Elder, Edred, Edwy, Edgar, Ethelred II —which enable us approximately to date the entries as between 941 and 1043; but they give also the names of four Cornish bishops, thus supplying us with important details of Church history, *viz.*, Aethelgeard, Comoere, Wulfsige, and Burhweald. Some of these manumissions are written in Anglo-Saxon, but the great majority are in Latin. There is not much variety in the forms, and the following are typical examples:—(1) "Hoc est nomen illius mulieris Wencenethel, quam liberavit Ordgar dux pro anima sua super altare Petroci Sancti coram istis testibus: Wulfsige Episcopus, Leumarh presbiter, Grifiuth presbiter, Morhaitho diaconus." (2) "Hoc est nomen illius mulieris Codgiuo, quam liberata fuit pro anima Maccosi centurionis super altare Sancti Petroci in uigilia Aduentus Domini, istis testibus uidentibus: Boia decanus, Godricus presbyter, Sewinus presbyter, Eli diaconus, Wulgarus diaconus, Godricus diaconus, Elwine diaconus, Eadricus clericus, Elwinus, Edwerdus, Sicteicus, Waso, Wulwerdus, et alii quamplurimi de bonis hominibus. Si quis tam temerarius sit qui hanc libertatem fregerit, anathema sit a Deo et ab angelis Eius. Amen, fiat." "Ordgar dux,"

* *Anglo-Saxon Chron.*, A.D. 981; *Monast. Exon.*, 15, 410; *Celtic Christianity*, 60, 106, 125.

it may be noted, can be none other than the founder of Tavistock Abbey.*

The other member of the triad of great Cornish monasteries that survived from early times was St Stephen's-by-Launceston. For several centuries past the names Launceston and Dunheved have been used interchangeably; but when *Domesday* was compiled, the latter was a fortified place, wherein was the castle of Robert, Earl of Mortain, half-brother of the Conqueror; while just a mile distant in the north-west, across the valley of the Kensey, was Launceston, where were settled the secular canons of St Stephen's. Launceston was evidently a borough of some importance, inasmuch as it had enjoyed a market; but, as the town was unwalled, Earl Robert had transferred the market to Dunheved. Another transference followed not long afterwards, for about 1126 Henry I granted the possessions of the canons to Bishop William Warelwast; and the latter removed the establishment from the high ground down to the south bank of the river, calling it still St Stephen's, but converting the community into a body of fifteen canons living under the rule of St Augustine.†

St Nicholas's Priory at Tresco in the Scilly Islands was a dependency of Tavistock Abbey, the property having been granted to it by Henry I. There is mention of Religious being there as early as the reign of Edward the Confessor; and on getting a footing in that outpost, the authorities of Tavistock built a cell for two monks, one of whom was prior. Being so remote as twenty-five miles beyond Land's End, the very existence of these islands was unnoticed by *Domesday*, as also by the *Taxatio* of Pope Nicholas IV, by the *Nonarum Inquisitiones* in 1341, and even by the Commissioners of Henry VIII at the Dissolution; and though always forming part of the diocese of Exeter, they were—so far as is known—not included in episcopal Visitations. Indeed Bishop Grandisson in a letter to Pope John XXII

* Haddan and Stubbs, I, 676-683; *Anglo-Saxon Bishops*, etc., 100, 102.

† *Monast. Exon.*, 21, 412; *Launceston and Dunheved*, 1, 3; *Celtic Christianity*, 82, 107.

makes this admission:—"The diocese of Exeter includes some islands in the sea, but no bishop has ever been there, though it has been customary to send some brethren: this however I have not done."* So long-lasting was the neglect of this "Ultima Thule," that Bishop Temple is believed to have been the first diocesan to brave the stormy passage and set foot on those shores. But though so much cut off from the outside world, some of its priors were not only men of ability or goodness, but had promotion extended to them, Alan de Cornwall becoming Abbot of Tavistock in 1233, Richard Auncel Prior of St Michael's Mount in 1385, and John Denyngton Abbot of Tavistock in 1451. It was also of sufficient importance to be the subject of a couple of charters of Edward III. In one he approved of the services at Scilly being conducted temporarily by secular priests, inasmuch as, owing to the French war and other various reasons, the monks could not be persuaded to remain there ("aliis variis ex causis hiis diebus ibidem non audeant immorari"), The other was issued in response to a petition from the Prior, who complained that his resources were so often preyed upon by the visits of the crews of passing vessels, that the House was impoverished. The King therefore took the place under his special protection, and called upon all and sundry to assist in maintaining its rights.†

Because of its name, Lammana in the parish of Talland, on an island opposite Looe, is claimed as Celtic, as also Manaccan ("the monks' church"), and Mawnan too, whose equivalent meaning is taken to be Minster. Likewise St Kew is believed to be the successor of the ancient monastery of Landoho or Docco; while the Priory of St Michael's Mount is traced back at least to pre-Conquest days, and possibly those of Minster, St Cyricus, and St Anthony-in-Roseland. Besides these, we come across a number of churches that were served by communities of clergymen, most of which were probably monastic in origin, but were afterwards constrained to modify their constitution. The

* *Register*, I, 95; III, xx.

† *Monast. Exon.*, 73; *Celtic Christianity*, 114; *Abbots of Tavistock*, 61, 241.

most famous of these was the Collegiate Church of St Buryan, to which King Athelstan gave one small manor, free from all taxation, on condition that a hundred Masses and Psalters and daily prayers were offered for the good of his soul. Doubtless the foundation was already an ancient one in his day, but on account of the honour of his benefaction the dean and canons of later times regarded him as their founder.*

Another similar institution was the Collegiate Church of St Crantock, whose pre-Conquest property was the manor of Langovroc; and *Domesday* mentions too the canons of St Achebran, who held the manor of Lannachebran at St Keverne—afterwards conferred on Beaulieu Abbey by Richard, Earl of Cornwall, who was a son of King John. Like it was the church of Perranzabulo, whose canons held the three-hide manor of Lanpiran in the lifetime of the Confessor, and which, having lost its collegiate character, was appropriated to the Exeter Chapter by Henry I; and, again, there was the Church of St Probus, whose canons or prebendaries in the same reign owned the manor of Lanbrabois, *alias* Lamprobus—a name that is suggestive of high antiquity, though the saint himself cannot be exactly placed in history.†

A hero of later times was St Neot, reputed half-brother of King Alfred, and a monk of Glastonbury Abbey, who settled in the parish that is called after him. He lived there for some years as a hermit, and then founded his monastery, ruling over it as abbot till his death in 877. One chronicler avows that he received visits from his royal kinsman, who hunted in the neighbourhood, and was cured of a malady at the shrine of St Guerir, the former patron; and it is even said to have been a result of Neot's exhortation that Alfred restored the English School at Rome. The east of Cornwall was by that time coming under Saxon influence, and his monastery, which had disappeared before the time of the Survey, must not be reckoned to the credit of the Celtic Church. His remains were afterwards stolen and taken away to the Huntingdonshire St Neot's, but a reliquary

* *Monast. Exon.*, 6; *Celtic Christianity*, 93, 108.

† *Monast. Exon.*, 54, 59, 71; *Celtic Christianity*, 108-112.

that contained an arm of the saint is still to be seen in his own church.*

British soil must have been reddened with the blood of a numerous army of martyrs, when the Germanic tribes seized possession of the country in the fifth and sixth centuries; and doubtless Gildas and Nennius could have preserved for us the names and the passions of many a Briton who thus qualified for the bearing of the palm branch. But in the south-west this would not happen, for it was long before the Saxons were able to subjugate Damnonia, and by that time the *raison d'être* of persecution had vanished, because the conquerors were now fellow-Christians with the conquered. There are three names, however, which claim admission into the list of the martyr-band, all of them Devonians, and all maidens, whose *Acta* are very similar. Maybe we hesitate to accord to them the title of martyrs, as it is matter of doubt whether their deaths were consequent on their religion, but their memory has been venerated as such by many generations of Christians.

St Sativola (such is her Latin name), who is commonly known as St Sidwell, is said to have been the daughter of a Briton, who bequeathed to her some landed property in the suburbs of Exeter; but her covetous step-mother, to whose guardianship she was left, induced a servant to murder her while engaged in devotions near a well outside the city. The well was ever after called by her name, and close by was built St Sidwell's Church, where her body was entombed. One of her brothers is said to have been Paul—the patron of St Paul's Church in Exeter, and known afterwards as St Pol de Léon—and if that was so, her date would be early in the sixth century. Her name is popularly thought to be a combination of "scythe" and "well," and she is usually portrayed with those emblems. She is so represented in the east window of Exeter Cathedral, and her figure is to be found painted on several screens in the neighbourhood—St Mary Steps, Whimple, Plymtree, Kenn, Ashton, and Hennock; and also further away at Wolborough, Holne, and Bere Ferrers. In Cornwall she was honoured with the

* *British Saints*, IV, 4; *Celtic Christianity*, 81, 118, 127.

dedications of Laneast Church and of chapels at Launceston and Mawnan. Sidwell's sister Jutwara is said to have suffered a like fate, her step-mother inciting her brother Benna against her by fictitious tales concerning her moral character, so that he slew her as she was coming out of church. The screens at Ashton and Hennock have pictures of her, as well as of her sister. The other member of the trio was St Urith or Hieretha of Chittlehampton, who apparently belonged to the same age as the others. She was born close by at Stowford, in the adjoining parish of Swymbridge, and as a youthful convert to Christianity had dedicated herself to perpetual virginity. This aroused the hatred of her heathen step-mother, who instigated the haymakers on the estate to murder her, which they did with their scythes early one summer morning as she was on her way to her devotions. Chittlehampton Church and a chapel at Stowford were dedicated under her name; and her shrine, erected in the former became a very popular object of pilgrimage until its destruction in 1540. Her well may still be visited by the road-side near the church.*

Thus by the middle of the eleventh century the ecclesiastical spade-work had been done—Devon and Cornwall were Christian from end to end, the reins of Church government were gathered into the hands of one bishop, the district was dotted over by a fair number of communities of clergy, some in towns but others in remote country places, and just a few predecessors of our parish churches were to be found in divers places, each with its priest to offer the daily sacrifice and to minister to the spiritual needs of the people. All was now ready for the superior order and organization, which through England's closer connection with the Continent began to come in during the Confessor's reign, and after the Conquest soon became altogether paramount in the Church's economy.

* *British Saints*, I, 187; IV, 174; *Church Dedications*, II, 407; *Historic Towns—Exeter*, 15; *Devonian Year Book* (1915), 91, 96, 98; *Trans. of Devon. Assoc.*, XLVI, 290.

CHAPTER III.

SETTLEMENT OF THE SEE AT EXETER.

EXETER was fortunate in its first bishop, for all that we know of him, both personal and circumstantial, is in his favour. An Englishman by family but a Briton by birth (his name indicates the former, and Florence of Worcester describes him as British), Leofric had sympathies with both races in his extensive diocese. He was also a *persona grata* with both Edward the Confessor and William I. To the former he had been a chaplain several years before his consecration, and had received from him the grant of an estate of 7 mansi (afterwards known as Holcombe) at Dawlish —the original charter is still at Exeter, and among others bears the names of Lyfing Bishop of Crediton and Bishop Burhweald as witnesses; and soon after, he was promoted to the high honour of being Chancellor. From the Conqueror he obtained in 1069 a charter confirming his handing on to his canons at Exeter as an endowment the aforesaid lands at Holcombe, together with other property belonging to him at Bemtun (Bampton), Esttun (Aston), and Ceommanyg (Chimney in the parish of Bampton Aston), in Oxfordshire. Furthermore, he had the advantage of an acquaintance with continental education, having been brought up in Lotharingia (a district consisting of portions of the present Germany, Belgium, and France), where he came under the influence of the Church reform and the revival of learning that were then spreading through Europe. Besides all this he was a man of good life, zealous as a working diocesan, a lover of the Church, and exceedingly generous to his cathedral and its staff.

It is worthy of notice that, though a foreigner by residence, his appointment to an English see was not resented by his

flock, as would have been the case if he had been a Norman. Robert of Jumièges and William and Ulf were all Normans, and for their own safety retired from their sees of Canterbury and London and Dorchester, seeking refuge abroad, at the time of the nationalist movement of 1052 ; but other prelates who were Lotharingians, such as Duduc of Wells and Hermann of Ramsbury and Leofric of Crediton, did not find it necessary to withdraw, for they were nearer akin to the English than were the hated Frenchmen.*

The agitation for the removal of the see from Crediton to Exeter originated with him, being one result of his acquaintance with better Church organization abroad. But his method of accomplishing it was foreign, rather than English ; for, instead of directly petitioning the King, he sent his chaplain Lanbert to the Pope, begging him to induce Edward to effect the change on the score that, being secure from hostile attack, he would be the better able to execute his ecclesiastical duties. Leo IX expressed his surprise that there should be English bishops not having their episcopal seats in cities, and gave his reply thus briefly and pointedly :— " In the case of our brother Leofric, we command and entreat that, of your love for the Lord and for us, you will assist him to remove his throne from the village of Crediton to the city of Exeter." The Confessor not only gave his consent, but came down in person, accompanied by his queen and his lords spiritual and temporal, and installed Leofric as first Bishop of Exeter. He granted a charter, too, dated 1050, and witnessed by two archbishops, five bishops, five dukes, three nobles, two abbots, and fourteen other clerics, in which, without mentioning the papal rescript, he declares :—" By the authority of the Heavenly King, by my own, and by that of my consort Eadgytha, and of all my bishops and dukes, I do appoint Leofric to be the pontiff there." He is also careful to make quite sure the union of the two dioceses :—" The diocese of Cornwall with all the parishes, lands, towns, substance, and privileges belonging thereto, I deliver to St Peter in the city of Exeter, that there

* *Leofric Missal*, xxi.

may be one episcopal seat and one bishopric and one ecclesiastical rule, on account of the paucity and the devastation of goods and people, inasmuch as pirates have been able to plunder the Churches of Cornwall and Crediton; and on this account it has seemed good to have within the city of Exeter a more secure protection against enemies." And then he concludes :—" Therefore this charter I, King Eadward, with my own hand lay upon the altar of St Peter; and leading the prelate Leofric by his right arm, and my Queen Eadgytha leading him by his left, I place him in the episcopal throne in the presence of my dukes and kinsmen, nobles and chaplains, and with the assent and approval of the Archbishops Eadsine and Aelfrick, and all the others whose names are mentioned at the end of this instrument."

This enthronization must indeed have been a stately and impressive ceremony, and very fittingly Bishop Stapeldon, when in 1317 he erected the beautiful and lightly sculptured stone sedilia on the south side of the high altar, placed in the central canopy a statue of Bishop Leofric, with King Edward the Confessor and Queen Edith in those on his right and left respectively. The sedilia remain intact, carefully restored in 1876; but the niches are empty, though the sockets are still there. Probably we must explain the disappearance by the statement of the contemporary narrator, Dr Bruno Ryves, who says that when the Parliamentarian troops under Fairfax took the city in 1645, they sacrilegiously entered the Cathedral, and did " pluck down and deface the statue of an ancient queen, the wife of Edward the Confessor, mistaking it for the statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary." Doubtless all three figures were destroyed at the same time, but a memento of the great event yet survives, for within the sedilia may be seen just above each seat a carved head, the middle one being that of a bishop—probably Leofric, with the King and the Queen occupying the other spaces.

The monks whom he found at Exeter, Leofric ejected, and introduced in their place twenty-four secular canons with twenty-four vicars to sing the services in the Cathedral. These, however, were not to live, as was usual in England, each in his own house or rooms, and maybe each with a wife

and family; but he placed them under the severe foreign Rule of Chrodegang, Bishop of Metz (743–766), with which he would naturally have been familiar in Lotharingia, and which had been commended to the Church of England by the Council held at Aenham in Hampshire under the presidency of Archbishop Alphege in 1009. By this Rule the canons and vicars were to be celibates, and in actuality, though not in name, were to live a common life, having their meals together in their refectory, and sleeping in one dormitory, and all taking part in the seven daily offices in the Cathedral choir. Long and rigorous fasts were enjoined, and much corporal punishment, especially for the younger members ("eorum latera, ne indurescant, virgis assidue tundenda sunt"); so that it is not surprising to find that three centuries later William of Malmesbury commented on the Rule having fallen partly into abeyance, and that Bishop Brantyngham of his bounty made other provision for the vicars by erecting for them a spacious and beautiful hall, with kitchen and other suitable buildings, on a plot of ground within the Cathedral Close and immediately to the west of the deanery precinct.*

At first Leofric supported his Chapter at his own expense; for the Church's property—Athelstan had endowed St Peter's with twenty-six manors—had all been alienated, with the exception of two hides of land at Ide. Furthermore, the Church had become so impoverished, and the services of the sanctuary had had so little care bestowed on them, that it possessed—so Leofric himself stated—only five service-books, "very worthless," and "one worthless set of vestments." It is evident that the monastery had not recovered, and had made no great effort to recover, from the ravages of the Danes in 1003, when Sweyn had captured and plundered the city. Leofric gradually retrieved most of these estates, including property at Topsham, Clyst Honiton, Newton St Cyres, Sidbury, Branscombe, Culmstock, St Mary Church, Staverton, and Salcombe, and was able to set his Cathedral establishment on a satisfactory financial basis. The other wants also he saw to, and with justifiable pride he could tell

* *Leofric Missal*, xxv; Brantyngham's *Register*, 675.

of the wealth of equipment that he had succeeded in bestowing —a great store of holy vessels and vestments, crosses and candlesticks, tapestries and hangings, service-books and bells.

In addition to all these, he gave to his Cathedral a library of books—about sixty works, half of which were in the English language. One of them was the famous anthology of Anglo-Saxon poetry, now known as the *Liber Exoniensis*, which is a treasured possession of the Chapter. Besides a collection of legal documents and a series of ninety-five riddles (some of which can be traced back to the eighth century), this *Exeter Book*, whose writing belongs to about 1000 A.D., comprises a number of poems, chiefly of religious character. Among the works in this volume Cynewulf is credited with the composition of "Christ," "The Incarnation," "The Ascension," "The Last Judgment," "St Juliana," and "St Guthlac"; and there are others of unknown authorship, such as "The Wanderer," "Phoenix," and another on "St Guthlac."

The other books, with one exception, were not a very interesting collection, though we should like to know the contents of the "Two Summer Reading-books" and the "One Winter Reading-book." They include a number of service-books (missals, psalters, hymnaries, benedictionals, etc.), various parts of the Old Testament, Biblical Commentaries by Isidore and Bede, a Martyrology, the Passions of the Apostles, a Penitential, a Book of Canons, and Latin and English copies of the *Consolation* of Boëthius. The list is preserved in a Gospel-book, which was also presented by Leofric to his Cathedral, though it is not mentioned with the others; and it closes with a request that worshippers there would pray for the soul of the donor, together with a curse on any one who should dare to alienate his gifts. But neither the imprecation nor regard for the interests of local posterity withheld the Dean and Chapter of 1602 from permitting Thomas Bodley to remove this volume from Exeter to Oxford, together with eighty other manuscripts; and it still figures in the catalogue of the Bodleian Library, which he was at that time engaged in founding. The *Liber*

Exoniensis is the sole survivor of Leofric's benefaction still remaining at Exeter; but sixteen others of his books have been identified elsewhere, one being in the British Museum, seven in the Bodleian, and seven at Cambridge.*

The one other of Leofric's gifts to his Cathedral that is of exceptional interest is the volume known as *The Leofric Missal*, which is doubtless one of the two works that head the list in the *Evangeliarium*, under the title of "ii fulle maesse bec" ("two plenary missals"). It is one of the books that the Dean and Chapter allowed Dr Bodley to carry off to Oxford, where it now is; and it is a thick quarto volume, measuring eight inches by six, and contains 756 pages, the leaves being of vellum.†

It comprises three distinct works, bound together in one cover, the first (which forms two-thirds of the whole) being a copy of the Gregorian Sacramentary (omitting however the Ordinary of the Mass); the second an Anglo-Saxon Calendar, with tables for finding Easter and for telling the position of the sun and the changes of the moon, and divers others; and the third a collection of various masses, benedictions, prayers, historical documents, and manumissions. Dr F. E. Warren is of opinion that the first was written in some Benedictine monastery in Lotharingia, within the district of Arras and Cambray, early in the tenth century, and that Leofric brought it to England when, as seems probable, he accompanied Edward the Confessor in 1042; that he afterwards appended to it the other two works, both written in English, the former at Glastonbury about 970 A.D., and the latter partly in the tenth and partly in the eleventh century; and that he then presented the whole volume to his Cathedral during his own lifetime. It is unfortunate, however, that the original arrangement of the parts has been sadly confused, for at some unknown period—maybe when it was last rebound more than a century ago—the contents were jumbled together, and some are altogether missing.

Of the fourteen other copies of the Gregorian Sacramentary,

* *Devon Notes and Queries*, VIII, 208.

† *Leofric Missal*, xxii, xxvi.

most of which belong to the ninth century, though a few are of the tenth or eleventh, the Leofric Missal agrees in broad outlines most fully with the *Codex Vaticanus*, a Parisian MS., edited by Muratori in 1748 ; for it contains 318 masses, of which 264 are common to both. But in details, such as various readings, it follows the Parisian *Codex Ottobonianus* (now in the Othobonian Library in the Vatican at Rome). It is interesting, too, to notice that its points of likeness to the Sarum Missal are much more numerous than those in which it is like the Roman.

Mention should here be made of certain usages of the Church of England of the tenth century, which are exemplified in the Leofric Missal—usages that do not prevail now in the Roman Church, nor, with one exception, in the Anglican.

A salient feature of our Codex is the large number of triple benedictions, varying according to the Sunday or festival, which were pronounced after the Lord's Prayer and before the Communion. These were peculiar to the ancient Churches of Gaul and Spain, and were not to be found in the Roman rite, so they do not appear in the *Codex Vaticanus*. Every "Benedictio" consisted of three variable clauses, suitable to the day, each ending with "Amen" ; and of two final clauses, which were always the same. That for Easter Day was as follows :—

"May the Almighty God bless you by the means of the paschal observance of this day, and mercifully vouchsafe to defend you from all wickedness. Amen.

"And may He, who by the resurrection of His only begotten Son restores you to everlasting life, by His coming endue you with the joys of immortality. Amen.

"And may you who have kept the days of fasting or of the Lord's Passion, and are now celebrating the joyful paschal feast, by His help come with glad hearts to those feasts that are not annual but perennial. Amen.

"This may He vouchsafe to grant, whose kingdom and rule endure for ever and ever without end. Amen.

"The blessing of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and the peace of the Lord be with you always."

Response. "And with thy spirit."

The three variable clauses for Maundy Thursday were these :—

"May God bless you, even He who by the Passion of His only begotten Son hath willed that the old passover should be converted into the new; and may He grant you that all taint of the old leaven may be purged away, and the new sprinkling may abide in you. Amen.

"And may you, who have come together with devout hearts to celebrate the Supper of our Redeemer, carry away with you a banquet of eternal riches. Amen.

"And may you be cleansed from all stain of sins by the kind help of Him, who in order to suggest an example of humility condescended to wash the disciples' feet. Amen."

It is remarkable that these Benedictions are not provided for the Sundays between the Epiphany and Lent, nor for those between Pentecost and Christmas.

Another characteristic is the large number of Proper Prefaces; for whereas the Gregorian Sacramentary in its Roman form had only eight, the Leofric Missal contains over two hundred. Such was usual in Gaul and Spain and England, which commonly had a special Preface for each Sunday and festival, *e.g.*, the Missal of Robert of Jumièges (c. 1020 A.D.) has 281 Prefaces, and another Winchester Missal of a century later has 190, and the Missal of St Augustine's Abbey at Canterbury has over 70.*

Further, there was provided a "Missa Annotina," to be celebrated on or about Low Sunday, when those who had been baptized at Easter-tide of the preceding year were to go to church as a testimony of the public renewal of their baptismal vows. Again, the formal exclusion of penitents from church and their reconciliation were covered by an "Ordo agentibus publicam poenitentiam" for Ash Wednesday, and an "Ordo ad reconciliandum" for Maundy Thursday. The Missal also contains ample evidence of the then prevalent practice of all persons communicating in both kinds; but the people received from the chalice by means of a metal reed or pipe, and the "one silver pipe," which figures among Leo-

* *Prayer Book Dic.*, 559; Procter and Frere, 489; *Missal of St Augustine's Abbey, Canterbury*, clxvi.

fric's gifts to his Cathedral, probably served this purpose. On Good Friday, however, only one species was administered, the Sacrament being reserved from Maundy Thursday. Lastly, sick persons were communicated by intinction, the Host being dipped into wine or water, and administered with a formula that implied the presence of both kinds.*

The Anglo-Saxon Calendar, which is incorporated with the Missal of Leofric, presents a full list of persons commemorated—340 in number, besides those who figure in the Old and New Testaments. At that period there was freedom of action in the selecting of those who were to be canonized, and each diocese or monastery had its own list of saints, whose names were to be venerated. This particular selection is to be admired for its catholicity, for, though drawn up at Glastonbury, it extends fitting recognition to the divers parts of the Western Church, including also various great or noted personages from the east. For us the English entries are of chief interest, and these include three Archbishops of Canterbury—Augustine, Mellitus, and Theodore; three northern Bishops—Aidan, Cuthbert, and Wilfrith; two northern Abbots—Benedict Biscop and Ceolfrid; three prominent midland Saints—Chad of Lichfield and Guthlac of Croyland and Etheldreda of Ely; Boniface of Devonshire; and four famous representatives of Celtic Christianity—Gildas the Welshman and historian, Samson of Wales and Cornwall and Brittany, and Patrick and Bridget of Ireland; to whom were added, a century later, David of Wales and Winwaloe of Cornwall. It is worthy of note that among festivals of first rank were placed the Finding of the Cross, the Assumption, both the Nativity and the Beheading of St John the Baptist, and commemorations of three English saints, *viz.*, Cuthbert, Augustine, and Guthlac, and of five foreigners, *viz.*, Clement of Rome, Lawrence, Martin, Benedict, and Gregory; and that St Peter and St Paul were commemorated on successive days—June 29th and 30th. Furthermore, it is remarkable that the Calendar contains no mention of St Joseph of Nazareth, St Mary

* *Leofric Missal*, xxvi-xliii, lxiii-lxiv.

Magdalene, St Joseph of Arimathea, St Barnabas, the Venerable Bede, Bishop Aldhelm, or St Swithun, or of All Souls' Day, and that only five Octaves and seven Vigils figure therein.*

The third part of the volume contains, besides thirty-four Common or Votive Masses, twenty-five Masses for Saints' Days, which are evidently intended to be supplementary to those of the Leofric Missal (part I), for, with the sole exception of one for St John the Baptist's Day, these are all novel. There is also a series of historical documents, principally connected with the translation of the see from Crediton to Exeter and the efforts of Leofric for the benefit of his diocese, with a notice of his death.

In the same third part are recorded in two collections a number of manumissions of serfs, one lot belonging to about the year 970, and the other to the reign of Edward the Confessor. The former are mostly connected with the neighbourhood of Tavistock, whose Abbey was founded in 961 by Earl Ordgar, and one of them makes mention of the founder :— " These are the names of the men who were freed for Ordgar at Bradstone, where he lay sick, that is, Cynsie from Liwton (Lifton), and Godchild of Lambourn (Lamerton), and Leofric of Sourton, Dolawine's son, and Eadsig of Churchford, and Aelfgyth of Buckland, and Small of Ocmundtun (Okehampton), and Wifman of Bradstone, and Byrhflaed of Trematon, and Aelfled of Clymeston (Stoke Climsland), in witness of Wynstan the mass-priest, and Wulfsie of Lambourn, and of all the priests of the convent there, and Aelfgyth of Sourton. And thereto is witness Cynsie the priest, and Goda the priest, and Aelfric the priest, who wrote this writing. This was done at Borslea (Bowsleigh in the parish of Bratton Clovelly) for Ordgar." Another typical instance is this :—" Eadgyfu freed Aethelgyfu, Wunchild's wife, at four cross roads on the eve of midsummer mass-day at Braeg (Bridgerule), in witness of Brown the mass-priest, and of Wulfnoth the mass-priest, and of all the priests of the convent there." Of the later manumissions these are examples :—" Halwyn Hoce

* *Leofric Missal*, xliii-liv.

in Exeter has freed Hagelflaed, her woman, whom she bought and fostered for her soul. May Christ and St Peter and all Christ's saints be wroth with those who shall ever reduce her to servitude. Amen." "Here is made known in this book that Godwine Black has bought himself and his wife and his offspring from William Hoseth for fifteen shillings, in witness of Aedmer, etc. And have he God's curse, whoever shall undo it. Amen."*

The history of this third portion of the Leofric Missal may be inferred from the occurrence of these manumissions. The MS. evidently belonged to Tavistock Abbey, and was probably conveyed to Crediton by Lyfing, when, from being abbot of the former, he was promoted to be bishop of the latter place. Finally it was transferred by his successor Leofric to Exeter, when that city became the seat of the bishopric, and there the later entries of manumissions were recorded on its pages.

The grave of this good and great prelate Leofric, who died in 1072, is not known. It was believed that he was buried under what is now St James's Chapel by the south choir aisle of the Cathedral; but, though on two separate occasions excavations were made in order to search for it, no trace of his body could be found. In the sixteenth century, on the instigation of John Hoker, the City Chamberlain, and at the expense of the Dean and Chapter, a monument, composed of old materials, and bearing the legend, "Leofricus the first byshoppe of Exeter lyeth here," was erected in the south transept, as his remains were thought to rest below; but this was demolished in recent times, leaving only three carved stone panels of mediaeval date—possibly a portion of Bishop Stapeldon's reredos for the high altar—one of which has a figure of a bishop, labelled "S. Dionysius."†

It is probable, however, that both these conjectures are mistaken. Leofric's body is said to have been buried in the crypt of his cathedral ("in crypta eiusdem ecclesiae"), that is, beneath the place of the present Lady Chapel. Most

* *Leofric Missal*, lv-lxiii; Haddan and Stubbs, I, 688-690.

† *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, XXXIII, 63; *Leofric Missal*, xx; *Archit. Hist. of Ex. Cath.*, 56, 98, 126.

appropriately there were afterwards gathered around him there the bodies of his early successors, Bartholomew and Simon of Apulia, whose effigies are set under arches in the south wall; and also those of Bronescombe and Quivel, who began the building of the enlarged cathedral. The new structure was sufficiently advanced for those who came after to be buried in it, though one of later times—Bishop Stafford—preferred to be laid *vis-à-vis* to Bronescombe, their beautiful arched canopies forming effective pendants to one another. There is something to be said for the theory that Leofric's body was translated from the crypt and entombed beneath the sedilia on the south of the high altar, even as in Westminster Abbey the remains of King Sebert, the founder, were laid in the corresponding place there. Twelve pence were expended in 1323, only two years after the completion of the sedilia, "for an inscription of 500 letters"; and in 1418 the sum of twenty pence was paid "for the inscription on the stone of the Lord Leofric, first Bishop of Exeter Cathedral." Both of these may well refer to an epitaph on the blank wall at the back of the sedilia.*

The thirty-one years' episcopate of Leofric's successor Osbern (*alias* Osbert) was not one of special importance to the diocese of Exeter, although he was highly placed in the State as well as in the Church—for he seems to have been Chancellor to William I, but probably resigned that office on his consecration by Lanfranc in 1072. He was a man of English affinity and of English sympathies, notwithstanding the fact that he was of Norman up-bringing—being a son of Osbern the Seneschal, who was Guardian of Normandy for Duke William; and he was a brother of William Fitz-Osbern, one of the Conqueror's generals at the Battle of Hastings, and afterwards Earl of Hereford. During the reign of his kinsman Edward the Confessor he crossed over to England, becoming a royal chaplain, and holding lands in Cornwall at Stratton. William of Malmesbury speaks of his English predilections, preferring native to foreign ways in the matter of food and in other respects,

* *Archit. Hist. of Ex. Cath.*, 56; *Notes on Ex. Cath.*, 8; MS. *History of Exeter* in Bodleian Library; Oliver's *Bishops*, 8.

and, after the manner of ancient prelates, being content with old buildings. Consequently, the new style of architecture, which in his day was being so generally adopted in England, and had for longer been in vogue on the Continent, was not introduced during his episcopate for the transformation of Exeter Cathedral.

His private character appears to have been beyond reproach; but he had an unfortunate quarrel with a community of Benedictine monks, said to number six, who were an offshoot of Battle Abbey, and had recently settled in Exeter, and erected their buildings on land that had been granted to the parent-house by the Conqueror. The grant consisted of the Church of St Olaf and some adjoining property, on which at the time of the Domesday Survey there stood eight houses. The establishment took the name of St Nicholas's Priory, and claimed to have been founded by William Rufus in 1089; but, though it was, and continued to be, the chief conventual House in Exeter, it was always in some degree dependent on Battle Abbey, paying to it an annual subsidy of sixty shillings (afterwards reduced to twenty), and accepting as rulers the nominees of the Abbot, who usually selected them from his own monastery. To them Bishop Osbern refused rights of burial, and also attempted to interfere with their customary bell-ringing; but, on the intervention of the Primate Anselm, he agreed that the bells should be rung at any times but Christmas night, Easter Eve, and the Festival of St Peter and St Paul, and that on Palm Sunday and Ascension Day the monks should go in procession with the Cathedral clergy. The burial claims were also allowed, and the Bishop became the good friend of the Priory. The diocese, however, must have suffered seriously from the lack of episcopal oversight about the commencement of the twelfth century, for not only was Osbern blind for some years before his death (1103)—which prompted William of Warelwast (who ultimately succeeded him) to agitate for his deposition—but after his decease the see remained vacant for four years, during the troublous contention between Henry I and Archbishop Anselm concerning investiture.*

* *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, XLII, 278; Oliver's *Bishops*, 11; H. Reynolds, 27.

The Domesday Survey, being made in the middle of Bishop Osbern's episcopate, affords opportunity of forming some estimate as to conditions of Church and State in the diocese of Exeter in 1086. We will treat of the two counties separately.

The population of Devon at that time may be reckoned at about 100,000, the various classes of men comprised in the Survey totalling 17,434. They were mostly villagers or dwellers in the country, there being only five borough towns—Exeter, Totnes, Barnstaple, Lydford, and Okehampton, though also Lupridge (in the parish of North Huish) had one burgess.

It is surprising to find that Devonshire was one of the most populous counties of England, the only others recorded as having more inhabitants being Norfolk (27,087 men), Lincoln (25,305), and Suffolk (20,491). Essex, though in area a small county, came next (with 16,060), and Kent also was high in the list. So it is manifest that the bulk of the population was settled in the counties of the east coast: but after that region, the most populous part of England in the eleventh century was Devonshire, together with Somerset, contiguous to it on the east. It must be added, however, that the Survey did not include Northumberland, Cumberland, Westmorland, and Durham, and that the returns of Lancashire and Monmouthshire are not given. The total number of men reckoned in *Domesday* amounts to 283,242, so that the whole population of the forty counties of England may be estimated as being about 2,000,000, and consequently the inhabitants of Devonshire were just twice the average for a county. But all the evidence goes to show that the people were not in a prosperous condition—production was scanty, the number of teams was small in comparison with the team-lands, and the assessment was almost exceptionally low. It is clear that the people were poor, and that very many were in a servile state.*

Only a little more than half the area of the county was

* *Ellis's Introd. to Domesday Book*, II, 435; *Domesday Book and Beyond*, 424, 428, 463, 467; Birch's *Domesday*, 53, 187, 251; *Feudal England*, 93, 96.

under cultivation (907,000 acres out of 1,650,000), the remainder being waste land, chiefly consisting of forest; for it was not till the reign of King John that Devon paid to the royal exchequer the enormous sum of 5,000 marks (£84,615 in modern value) in purchase of a charter of disafforestation; and that was not put in force till 1242, when at last the boundaries of the Forests of Dartmoor and Exmoor were delimited. The King held more land than anyone else (195,000 acres), his possessions including nearly half of the estates that had belonged to the Saxon settlers. Next to him came Baldwin de Brioniis the Sheriff, who owned 177 manors, comprising about 100,000 acres under cultivation, which constituted the Honour of Okehampton. The 185 manors (86,000 acres) of the Honour of Plympton were in the hands of several tenants *in capite*. The Bishop of Coutances had the Honour of Barnstaple with 90 manors, the brothers Ralph de Pomeroy and William Capra the Honours of Berry Pomeroy and Bradninch with 106 manors (45,000 acres), Robert, Earl of Mortain, 81 manors (40,000 acres), Joel (or Judhael) of Totnes the Honours of Harberton and Totnes with 103 manors (40,000 acres), Walter de Dowai the Honours of Bampton and Marshwood with 26 manors (20,000 acres), Odo the Honour of Torrington with 24 manors (14,000 acres), and William of Falaise the Honour of Dartington with 19 manors (12,000 acres). These were the most influential of the King's subjects in the county, and between them they owned about 500,000 acres, or considerably more than half of the cultivated land of Devon, other laymen holding 70,000 acres.

Okehampton was a place of importance, possessing both a castle, belonging to Baldwin, and also a market (the only one in the county mentioned in *Domesday*). No other Devonshire castle figures in the Survey; but we know that one existed at Exeter—the royal castle of Rougemont, and there were probably others then at Totnes and Barnstaple, and possibly also at Lydford, those at Plympton and Tiverton being built soon after.

The Church held considerable property in the county, the aggregate amounting at the time of the Survey to more

than one-seventh of the cultivated area, or one-fifth of the assessed value of the whole. It is thought that, when the Saxons conquered this region, they dedicated a tenth of the land for the relief of the poor, the maintenance of the Church's services, and the support of the clergy. This endowment was committed by Athelstan to the Bishop, when Crediton was made a see, and was augmented from time to time, the Conqueror and his Queen giving 12,600 acres, and his great men Baldwin and Joel of Totnes 2,600 acres; so that the *Domesday* records show that of 907,665 acres the Church owned 141,874, the Bishop's share being 76,699 acres, while the great monastic Churches of Tavistock and Buckfast held 34,298 acres, and other Churches 30,875 acres. The earliest known grants are those, already mentioned, of Polltun (Pawton in St Breocke), Caellwic or Caelling (Kelly in Egloshayle), and Landwithan (Lawhitton). Later acquisitions in Devon were Bishop's Nympton, Bishop's Tawton, Bishop's Teignton, and Paignton, and all these were episcopal manors at the time of the Survey, and so continued for long after.

Much enlightenment has been afforded by the Reverend O. J. Reichel on the subject of the number of churches in Devon at the time of the Survey, and he has drawn up a carefully calculated list. These he arranges in nine groups:—

1. Exeter Cathedral and 16 dependent churches, all belonging to the Bishop or the Chapter (St Martin's and St Sidwell's at Exeter, Ide, Topsham, Clyst Honiton, Stoke Canon, Culmstock, Sidbury, Branscombe, Salcombe Regis, Dawlish, Teignmouth, St Mary Church, Staverton, Ashburton, Colebrooke).
2. St Stephen's, Exeter, and 7 others, all belonging to the Bishop (Chudleigh, Paignton, Stoke Gabriel, Morchard Bishop, Bishop's Tawton, Swymbridge, Bishop's Nympton).
3. St Olave's, Exeter, and 1 dependent (Sherford).
4. Ten prebendal churches with 3 dependents:—St Mary's in the Castle of Exeter, Axminster, Cullompton, Crediton, Totnes (with St Peter's Chapel), Newton Ferrers, Plympton (with Wembury and Sutton Prior), South Molton, Braunton, Hartland.

5. Seven parochial churches or chapels :—Exminster, Pinhoe, Woodbury, Colyton, King's Kerswell, Yealmpton, Barnstaple.
6. Fourteen dependent on churches outside the diocese :—Yarcombe, Roridge in Upottery, Ottery St Mary, Uplyme, Sidmouth, Beer with Seaton, Otterton, Littleham, Abbot's Kerswell, Revelstoke, Newton St Petrock, Hollacombe, Northam, Umberleigh.
7. Tavistock Abbey and 9 dependents (Brent Tor, Milton Abbot, Plymstock, Denbury, Coffinswell, Hatherleigh, Burrington, Abbotsham, St Giles-in-the-Heath).
8. Buckfast Abbey and 6 dependents (Churstow, South Brent, Trusham, Zeal Monachorum, Down St Mary, Petrockstowe).
9. Modbury Priory.

The total sum of these amounts to seventy-nine. To these should probably be added some others which seem to owe their foundation to Celtic missionaries ; though one must not reckon all these as certainties, for some of them may be later dedications, named after British saints. The probability, however, is that they were either actually founded by the missionaries, or—in a few cases—dedicated in early times under Celtic names. In Exeter we find instances in the churches of St Kerrian's, St Petrock's, St David's, St Paul's, and St Cuthbert's ; and the most reasonable explanation of the double occurrence of the dedications of Holy Trinity and St Mary's and All Hallows' is that one of each belonged to the old British quarter of the city. Welcombe has a good claim to be regarded as a foundation of St Nectan ; Week St German's, St Budeaux, and Coryton enshrine in their names their probable origin ; the dedications of Portlemouth to St Winwaloe and Bradstone to St Non and Lundy to St Helen are taken to show an early origin ; and, as mentioned in a former chapter, a number of Petrock churches seem to indicate the missionary work of that great saint—Lydford, Clannaborough, Harford, Dartmouth, Tormohun, Kenton, Dunkeswell, Petton (Bampton), West Anstey, and Charles.

Further, the manumissions entered in books include references to "all the priests of the convent" at various places, who acted as witnesses of the freeing of serfs, the places mentioned being Okehampton, Bridgerule, and Bradstone. And again, we know that at Instow a priest was supported by the lord, who in all probability provided a church for his ministrations.*

It appears then that, at the time when *Domesday* was compiled, Bishop Osbern had the administration of about a hundred and nine churches in Devon, and perhaps also a few others of whose existence at that period we have no evidence. There are now (including the Cathedral) five hundred and fifty parish churches and a hundred and twenty licensed chapels—total, six hundred and seventy; so that in those days the Church of England provided rather more places of worship in proportion to the population than she does now; but, the actual number being so much smaller, many of the people must have been far away from any church. This is most clearly seen when we allocate the churches to their various (modern) deaneries.

Aylesbeare.—Clyst Honiton, Littleham, Otterton, Pinhoe, Stoke Canon, Topsham, Woodbury.

Barnstaple.—Barnstaple, Bishop's Tawton, Braunton, Instow, Pilton Priory.

Cadbury.—Clannaborough, Colebrooke, Crediton, Down St Mary, Morchard Bishop.

Christianity.—Exeter Cathedral, All Hallows'-on-the-Walls, Holy Trinity, St Cuthbert's, St David's, St Kerrian's, St Martin's, St Mary Arches, St Mary's in the Castle, St Olave's, St Paul's, St Petrock's, St Sidwell's, St Stephen's.

Chulmleigh.—Burrington, Zeal Monachorum.

Cullompton.—Bradninch, Cullompton, Culmstock.

Hartland.—Abbotsham, Hartland, Hartland Abbey, Lundy, Northam, Welcombe.

Holsworthy.—Bridgerule, Hollacombe.

* *Devon. Domesday*, Reichel, IV, 51, 58.

Honiton.—Axminster, Beer and Seaton, Colyton, Dunkeswell, Roridge (Upottery), Uplyme, Yarcombe.

Ipplepen.—Coffinswell, Dartmouth, King's Kerswell, Paignton, St Mary Church, Tormohun.

Kenn.—Dawlish, Exminster, Ide, Kenton, Teignmouth.

Moreton.—Abbot's Kerswell, Ashburton, Chudleigh, Denbury, Trusham.

Okehampton.—Hatherleigh, Okehampton, Week St German's.

Ottery.—Branscombe, Ottery St Mary, Salcombe Regis, Sidbury, Sidmouth.

Plympton.—Harford, Modbury Priory, Newton Ferrers, Plympton Priory, Plympton St Mary, Plymstock, Revelstoke, Wembury, Yealmpton.

Shirwell.—Swymbridge.

South Molton.—Bishop's Nympton, Charles, South Molton, Umberleigh, West Anstey.

Tavistock.—Bradstone, Brent Tor, Coryton, Lydford, Milton Abbot, Tavistock Abbey.

The Three Towns.—St Budeaux, Sutton Prior.

Tiverton.—Petton (Bampton).

Torrington.—Newton St Petrock, Petrockstowe.

Totnes.—Buckfast Abbey, South Brent, Staverton, Stoke Gabriel, Totnes, Totnes St Peter's Chapel.

Woodleigh.—Churchstow, Portlemouth, Sherford.

Two circumstances of that period very widely differentiated the conditions of public worship from those of the present time.

One was the custom of holding services in the open air. A cross was erected in a village or at four cross roads, and there the people assembled for the celebration of the Sacrament and the preaching of the Word, the minister being an itinerating priest sent out by the bishop or from some monastic church; but at the great festivals they would resort to a neighbouring monastic or collegiate church. For sacred buildings were few in the Anglo-Saxon age, as parochial churches did not come into vogue till Norman times—indeed, the system did not become usual till the twelfth century, and was not general until the thirteenth. Consequently, the bulk of the faithful

would have had no public services, if there had not been any provided out-of-doors.

The other circumstance was the remarkable smallness of the early churches. Very few structures of the Anglo-Saxon period are extant in England, but such as there are seem to us very diminutive. The total internal length of Escombe Church, Co. Durham, is 53 feet and its greatest breadth only 14; Deerhurst in Gloucestershire is 39 by 16; and Bradford-on-Avon in Wiltshire measures but 25 by 13. The church at Sherborne was much larger, but that was exceptional, for it was Aldhelm's cathedral, its length being nearly 200 and its width nearly 60 feet. Devonshire provides no examples of that age, though there are indications that lead us to infer that the original Exeter Cathedral was about 110 feet in length. But in Cornwall there are very ancient chapels at St Madron and Perranzabulo and St Gwithian, which may possibly be Celtic buildings. All three are tiny edifices, the first being but 21 feet by 12 internally, the second 25 feet by 12, and the last 49 by 15. Our wonderment is exercised concerning the practical use of such tiny shrines, which could give space to but few persons; and we can only suppose that the sacraments would be celebrated within, while the greater part of the congregation worshipped outside, the preaching too being out-of-doors.*

Conditions in Cornwall were very similar to those in Devon, though in some ways the people were less happily circumstanced. The country was more sparsely populated; for, while the area was a little more than half that of Devon, the population was less than a third, *viz.*, about 30,000 (the men included in the Survey being 5,438); and the inhabitants were even poorer than their neighbours, their rate of assessment being lower. However the population was not small when compared with other parts, as there were at least fourteen counties whose occupants were fewer. The chief holder of land was the King's half-brother, Robert, Earl of Mortain, who had 248 manors and the only two castles of Cornwall—Dunheved and Trematon. He was a grasping person, who had no scruples in laying hands on Church property, and in

* *Trans. of Devon. Assoc.*, XXX, 258-315.

Domesday Book there are many notices of ecclesiastical lands having been seized by him. There were no boroughs in Cornwall, but there were markets at Launceston, Liskeard, Bodmin, Trematon, Matele (*i.e.*, Methleigh in St Breage), and St German's (held unlawfully on Sunday).*

The half century that came after the Conquest was an era of considerable activity in the monastic history of our diocese. In Cornwall three Benedictine priories came into being at that time, apparently all of them during the reign of the first William, though each was an alien house, dependent upon some foreign monastery, and none of the three ever attained to any real importance. One of these, St Michael's Mount, was of almost royal foundation, as it owed its origin to the Conqueror's half-brother, Robert, Earl of Mortain, who attached it to the Abbey of Mont S. Michel in Normandy, and persuaded Bishop Leofric to exempt it from the episcopal jurisdiction of Exeter. Bishop William Warelwast consecrated its church in 1135, and the abbot of the mother-house sent over a prior and two monks to carry on the services in that airy and romantic island stronghold.† Another tiny community was St James's Priory at Tregony near St Probus, which is believed to have been founded soon after the Conquest by a member of the De Pomeroy family. It was appropriated to the Norman Abbey of St Mary de Valle, but later (1278) Bishop Bronescombe sanctioned an exchange, whereby Tregony was handed over to the Priory of Merton in Surrey.‡ The most affluent of the three was St Andrew's Priory at Tywardreath, which is situated between St Austell and Lostwithiel, its founder being a contemporary of the Conqueror, one of the Cardinhams, who annexed it to the Abbey of St Sergius and St Bacchus at Angers in the north-west of France. Its proximity to the sea exposed it to danger from piracy, so that Bishop Grandisson granted the brethren permission, whenever they might find it necessary, to remove

* *Feudal England*, 93, 96; *Ellis's Introd. to Domesday*, II, 432; Birch's *Domesday*, 188, 251; *Domesday Book and Beyond*, 424.

† Dugdale's *Monast.*, VI, 988; *Monast. Exon.*, 28.

‡ Dugdale's *Monast.*, VI, 1045; *Monast. Exon.*, 65; Bronescombe's *Register*, 275.

to some safe place and there to follow their Rule, until the peril was past.*

Soon after these Cornish three there sprang up other four in Devonshire, all of them in like manner alien priories, and none of them rising above second or third rank. They were the communities of Cowick, Totnes, Barnstaple, and Carswell.

After the Norman Conquest the manor of Cowick, on the right bank of the river Exe, opposite the Bonhay, which lies below the walls of Exeter, was granted to Baldwin, Sheriff of Devon, and brother of Richard de Redvers, Earl of Devon; and he passed it on (including Exwick, which was a part of the same estate) to his son William Fitz-Baldwin, who also held the office of Sheriff of Devon. By him this property, during the last decade or so of the eleventh century, was conferred on the famous Norman Abbey of Bec near Rouen—famous because of its founder and first Abbot Herlouin, and because of Lanfranc who was Prior under him, and because of Anselm, who succeeded Herlouin and was possibly still Abbot of Bec when it became possessed of Cowick. Thus it came about that St Andrew's Priory at Cowick, founded by William Fitz-Baldwin, was a dependency of Bec Abbey, which always appointed its priors.†

One of the four chief burghs of Devon in the eleventh century, Totnes, though much smaller than Exeter, was more considerable than either Barnstaple or Lydford, having a population of probably five or six hundred. The Conqueror granted to Judhael or Joel, son of Alured (or Alfred) of Brittany, a house in Exeter and 111 manors, comprising about 40,000 acres and assessed at 70 hides, which were made up of the estates of 39 dispossessed Saxon owners. This territory included Totnes, and, from his making this his residence, the proprietor was commonly known as Joel of Totnes. For twenty years he continued to hold these lands, which were chiefly in South Devon, though one manor

* Dugdale's *Monast.*, IV, 654; *Monast. Exon.*, 33; Grandisson's *Register*, 870.

† Dugdale's *Monast.*, VI, 1043; *Monast. Exon.*, 153; *Suburbs of Exeter*, 144.

was in Cornwall ; and then, in 1088, he showed his generosity to the Church by founding in Totnes the Benedictine Priory of St Mary, to which he appropriated the parish church of Totnes. But when, soon after Rufus's accession, some of the leading nobles conspired together to set his elder brother Robert, Duke of Normandy, on the throne of England, Joel of Totnes seems to have joined the confederacy. The triumphant sovereign consequently stripped him of his domains, which were bestowed on Roger of Nonant, whose family continued to hold them for several generations, the lordship passing later to the Zouches and then to the Edgcumbes. Being a Breton, it was natural that Joel should affiliate his priory to the Abbey of St Sergius and St Bacchus at Angers on the Brittany side of the river Loire ; though he would probably have made it an independent House, if he could have foreseen the disadvantages suffered by the hundred alien priories of England, when as a precautionary measure the Crown felt it advisable to take possession, as often as war broke out with France.*

The death of Rufus brought about a change, for Henry I revived his father's policy of honouring Joel of Totnes, and restored him to a leading place among the great men of Devon. Roger of Nonant, indeed, was not ousted from his possessions in the south of the county ; but Joel was made the chief landowner in the north, by receiving from the King the borough of Barnstaple and ninety-three manors. There he settled, apparently for the rest of his life, and founded a priory, in which in his old age he took the vows and spent his last years. His priory, dating from 1107, was dedicated in the name of St Mary Magdalene ; and it was made immediately subject to the Priory of St Martin's-in-the-Fields at Paris, and ultimately to the mother-house at Cluny, being the senior of all the Cluniac Houses in England.†

The little Priory of Carswell in the parish of Broadhembury, with a community of two monks, was a cell of Montacute

* Dugdale's *Monast.*, IV, 628 ; *Monast. Exon.*, 238 ; *Hist. of Totnes Priory*, 654.

† Dugdale's *Monast.*, V, 196 ; *Monast. Exon.*, 196 ; *Hist. of St Mary Mag., Barnstaple*, 24.

Priory in Somerset, and was an alien house, as Montacute was dependent on Cluny. It owed its origin to Matilda Peverell, a member of the family from which the parish of Sampford Peverell, some seven miles away, took its distinctive name. It seems never to have attained to fame or importance.*

One other monastic establishment belongs to that generation, and that not an alien foundation, but one of independent status and English obedience. Near the right bank of the river Dart, midway between Totnes and Dartmouth, an ancient gateway and the ruins of a chapel mark the site of the little St Mary's Priory at Cornworthy, a House of seven Augustinian Canonesses. Its origin is assigned to the Breton family of Zouche, who accompanied the Conqueror to England, and for long owned lands around Totnes and also at Clawton near Holsworthy. The Priory was insufficiently endowed with the manor of Cornworthy and the churches of Cornworthy, Clawton, and Petersmarland, and was always poor.†

We have now taken notice of the origin of a number of Religious Houses in the diocese. But monasticism occupied so important a place in ecclesiastical history, and so potent and far-reaching was its influence in the Church of the mediaeval ages, that we must devote a whole chapter to the topic, giving some account of the founding of those not already mentioned, and touching upon the salient points in the fortunes of them all.

* Dugdale's *Monast.*, V, 171 ; *Monast. Exon.*, 312.
† Dugdale's *Monast.*, VI, 550 ; *Monast. Exon.*, 236.

CHAPTER IV.

MONASTIC HOUSES IN THE DIOCESE.

THE great Church revival, that was brought about in England as a consequence of the Norman Conquest, led to a wide extension of the monastic system. This culminated in the twelfth century, when such activity was shown that a hundred and fifty-four new Religious Houses are said to have been built in the reign of Stephen alone; though it must be recognised that in that age men were impelled to adopt the cloistered life almost as much by political and social troubles as by a love of devotion. After that century this phase of Church extension waned, save for the shorter-lived enthusiasm attending the coming of the Mendicant Orders; and when the thirteenth century had run its course, but few monasteries were founded in England, partly owing to the rise of the universities, partly owing to political barriers placed in the way by legislation, but still more because the special call to a consecrated life was losing its power.

Of Religious Houses in the diocese of Exeter the historian has to take account of sixty-two—forty-two in Devon and twenty in Cornwall. These figures include a dozen collegiate churches and three hospitals, so that the communities of Regulars numbered forty-seven. Sixteen of these we reckon as belonging to the oldest Order, *i.e.*, they were originally or afterwards Houses of the Benedictine Rule; in Devon were Buckfast Abbey, Exeter Abbey, Pilton Priory, Tavistock Abbey, St Nicholas's Priory at Exeter, Totnes Priory, Cowick Priory, Modbury Priory, Otterton Priory, and Polslo Priory; and in Cornwall were the six Priories of Tresco, St Michael's Mount, Tywardreath, Tregony, Lammana, and Minster. The Cluniacs had priories at Barnstaple, Carswell, and Exeter (St James's) in Devon, and that of St Cyricus at St Veep in Cornwall. There were five Cistercian abbeys, all in Devon,

viz., Buckfast (taken over from the Benedictines), Forde, Dunkeswell, Newenham, and Buckland. Augustinians were domiciled in Hartland Abbey and Canonsleigh Abbey, and in the Priories of Cornworthy, Plympton, Marsh Barton, Ipplepen, and Frithelstock, in Devonshire; and in the Cornish Priories of Bodmin, Launceston, St German's, and St Anthony-in-Roseland. The Premonstratensians were represented only by Torre Abbey. Of the Mendicant Orders there were Dominicans at Exeter, Plymouth, and Truro; Franciscans at Exeter, Plymouth, and Bodmin; Carmelites at Plymouth; Crossed Friars at Exeter; and Hermits of St Augustine at Dartmouth; and there were Preceptories of Knights Hospitallers of St John of Jerusalem at Bodmescombe near Uffculme and at Trebigh in St Ive. Besides these each county had six collegiate churches:—Crediton, Chulmleigh, Ottery St Mary, Slapton, Haccombe, and Bere Ferrers, east of the Tamar; and on the west St Buryan, St Crantock, St Probus, St Endellion, St Teath, and Glasney. Also there were the hospitals of St John's and St Mary Magdalene's at Exeter, and St Michael's at Clyst, not far from the city.

The Regular life seems never to have been very much *en evidence* in Exeter, at least not after the time when the monastery of St Mary and St Peter had ceased to exist, and the monks had been ousted by Bishop Leofric in order to give place to the secular canons of his cathedral. Very different was the aspect of Church life at Canterbury and Durham and Ely with their conventual cathedrals dominating the whole place; or at London or Winchester or York, at each of which was a monastery that rivalled the mother-church in prestige and importance. Whereas Exeter had no great monastic foundation; and none of its churches was sufficiently large to take first rank, even if it had been given to one of the Religious Orders.

The chief convent of the city, St Nicholas's Priory, was, as already mentioned, not altogether an independent establishment, but looked to Battle Abbey as its superior. However, their mutual relations were cordial and appreciative, so that from time to time a Prior of St Nicholas's was chosen to occupy the Abbot's throne at Battle (Prior Roger in 1318,

Prior William Mershe in 1404, Prior John Newton in 1463, and Prior William Westfield in 1503 were so honoured); and it was in consequence of Prior Thomas Swyng's having exceeded his time-permit and remained too long in the Sussex home, that he found it advisable to tender the resignation of his office to Bishop Grandisson in 1353. We may infer that St Nicholas's bulked large as a component part of the city of Exeter; for when the Cathedral Chapter accomplished a water-works scheme, whereby they brought a supply from St Sidwell's to the Close, they conducted the water from there in three channels, whereof the Priory had one for itself, while the city had only one, the third being reserved for the Cathedral body. This was a benefit worth paying for, and the Chapter charged each of the other recipients eight shillings (£7) a year for the privilege. The Priory's possessions, too, were considerable, as many as seventy-nine houses belonging to it at the beginning of the fifteenth century, as well as manors and farms in the country; and early benefactors had conferred on it much property in Ireland—after the wont of those who effected the conquest in the twelfth century. In Church matters also it exercised a great deal of influence, having the patronage of St Olave's at Exeter, Alphington, Pinhoe, Brampford Speke, Cullompton, Netherexe, Cadbury, Poughill, Rackenford, and Bishop's Tawton; and it was an honour to the House that its last prior, William of Cullompton, was made Suffragan to Bishop Veysey, with the title of Bishop of Hippo, and held several Ordinations in the priory chapel during the closing years of its existence.*

Cowick Priory, just across the river Exe, originated about the close of the eleventh century, as an offshoot of the renowned Abbey of Bec in Normandy, and it had for chief patrons and benefactors the Courtenays, as descendants of William Fitz-Baldwin, who was the original donor of the manors of Cowick and Exwick to that abbey. A number of this family were interred in its chapel, including the first Earl of Devon of the Courtenay line, and it was probably after him that one of the apartments in the convent was known

* Dugdale's *Monast.*, III, 376; *Monast. Exon.*, 113; H. Reynolds, 155; *St Nicholas Priory, Exeter.*

as "ye Erles Chamber." The later history of the Priory was fraught with many misfortunes. There was the one that was common to all alien Houses—seizure by the English Government, whenever it was at war with France, lest they should harbour treason. This meant an entire upsetting of its whole economy, and serious financial losses. Then its proximity to the river exposed it to the danger of floods—a very real danger, as is clear from a letter addressed by Henry VI to Bishop Lacy in 1440. He says that he has received a petition from the Prior, setting forth that the Priory is situated close to the River Exe, and has of recent years suffered from great inundations, so that the premises are likely to be ruined, unless they are protected by immense banks; and indeed the church and the cloisters and most of the buildings are already so weak and so damp that they will probably collapse, unless an extensive restoration is speedily undertaken. On learning that the conventual income was not sufficient for such works, his Majesty released the Priory from its annual obligation of 24 marks (£239), and granted help in other ways. But further, the place was unfortunate in some of its rulers, for one prior, John de Bourgeanyll (about 1400 A.D.) allowed structural decay to go on unchecked not only at Cowick but also at Exwick and at Christow, and was guilty too of felling timber for his own profit at the last mentioned place. Another, William Dounebant, the same who succeeded in getting relief from the King, was charged with neglecting to repair the fabric, so that the church, the cloisters, the hall, the kitchen, the chief gateway, the great grange, and the bakehouse were all in a state of dilapidation; while he had felled and sold eighty oaks at Exwick and as many at Christow. And to crown it all, a great conflagration broke out on Palm Sunday in 1442, and wrought damage to buildings and chattels and live-stock, which was reckoned to amount to £177 (£2,685). The whole revenue of the Priory had been returned in 1337 as only £44, so these various disasters meant financial ruin; and consequently the next prior, Robert de Rouen, after struggling on for four years, resigned his office and surrendered his convent to the Crown in 1451. At first, Henry VI handed

over its property to Eton College; but thirteen years later Edward IV transferred it to Tavistock Abbey, which continued to hold it till the Dissolution.*

The Exeter diocese had only three Religious Houses for nuns—Polslo under the Benedictine Rule, and Cornworthy and Canonsleigh under the Augustinian; and of these the oldest was Polslo, which was situated in the parish of Heavitree, only a mile and a half eastwards from Exeter Cathedral. Having its origin in the reign of Henry II, who was one of its benefactors, it owed still more—probably its foundation—to Sir William de Tracy, one of the murderers of Archbishop Becket. Soon after, it enjoyed the patronage of William, Lord Brewer, Sheriff of Devon and founder of the abbeys of Torre and Dunkeswell, whose nephew and namesake later became Bishop of Exeter.†

As an outcome of a Visitation, Bishop Stapeldon sent to the prioress and nuns in 1320 a lengthy letter pointing out certain irregularities that called for amendment, none of them of a serious nature, but such as showed that discipline needed to be enforced more strictly in accordance with the Rule. It is interesting to note that these ladies were not conversant with Latin, so his Lordship wrote his communication in French; but as a check to indulgence in too much talking in forbidden places, such as the choir and the refectory, he recommended that they should make their wants known in Latin, without troubling about grammar:—"mieutz vault en latyn que autrement, tut ne soit mie le latin bien ordine solom la reule de gramere, sicome en cestre forme, candela, liber, missale, gradale, panis, vinum, cervisia, est, nonsic, et auxi dautres semblables." Another point of interest is that they were studying their own comfort by having their meals separately in private apartments, each with her own maid to prepare her food. This, the Bishop declared, must be stopped, and these domestics were all to attend on the community instead of one on each individual.

* Dugdale's *Monast.*, VI, 1,043; *Monast. Exon.*, 153; *Suburbs of Exeter*, 145; *Abbots of Tavistock*, 246.

† *Trans. of Devon. Assoc.*, XXII, 314; *Devon Notes and Queries*, II, 63, 188.

For a long period the Priory was but poorly endowed, so that the inmates were in straitened circumstances. Certainly they pleaded poverty in strongly expressed terms when Queen Philippa, not many years after Bishop Stapeldon's action, wrote to ask that her relative Johanete de Tourbeuyle might be received as an inmate of the House without taking the veil. They wrote a reply—in French—couched in very respectful and very deprecating language, asking to be excused this novel duty, and setting forth that, inasmuch as they had not sufficient for their own maintenance, they could hardly be expected to support a boarder. Describing themselves as her "poveres et humbles aunceles (ancillae) . . . . empriauntes votre douce pitee que mercey eyt de notre graund povertee," they declare, "nos sumes si poveres, Dieu le siet, et tot le pois que quant que nos avons ne suffit mie a petite sustenance de nos qui devons faire de jour et de nuit le service Dieu." Bishop Grandisson wrote to support their contention, but we are left to infer that the Queen did not press her request further. In after times the fortunes of the Priory seem to have improved, for the net revenue in 1534 was returned as £164 (£2,209 in modern value).*

Benedictine Tavistock was *facile princeps* among the Religious Houses of the diocese, but it was pre-eminent for its evil example in disorder and insubordination, and afforded to the world but a sorry spectacle of the cloistered life. For from the middle of the thirteenth century onwards that abbey was singularly unfortunate in its chief rulers, a number of the abbots being worldlings, who were mere pleasure-seekers, and so neglected their responsibilities that discipline fell into abeyance, the establishment was burdened with debt, and the buildings were allowed to become ruinous.

First came the case of John Chubbe, whose election to the abbacy in 1262 was somehow irregular, though Bishop Bronescombe accepted it as valid and granted him benediction. Two years afterwards, however, trouble began, for the Bishop summoned the Abbot and monks to him at Pilton to show their right to their churches and pensions and tithes ; and, on

* Dugdale's *Monast.*, IV, 425 ; *Monast. Exon.*, 162 ; *Suburbs of Exeter*, 36.

their failing to come, he sequestrated their estates, which had suffered greatly from depreciation and neglect. As matters did not mend, the Abbot was excommunicated; but, on his confessing and promising reformation, he was absolved. When all this had taken place a second time, and the Bishop had again received a bad report of the state of the Abbey, he caused a searching investigation to be made; and, learning from the monks and from clerics who were well informed, that the Abbot was "dicti Monasterii bonorum dilapidator intolerabilis et manifestus," he suspended him from administering the temporalities of the Abbey. The Abbot, however, defied him, and continued in his former evil ways. Furthermore, he perpetrated acts of gross violence against some of the monks, and, getting the corporate seal into his own hands, appropriated common property and treasures; and, though under the ban of the greater excommunication, he took part in divine service. The exigency called for extreme measures; so the Bishop visited the Abbey, and in the Chapter-house formally deposed the recalcitrant Abbot, and suspended him from exercising his priesthood for three years (March 19th, 1269).*

Robert Campell was superior as a man and as a ruler —the abbey church was rebuilt by him, being consecrated in 1318 by Bishop Stapeldon, who earlier in the same year had consecrated the rebuilt parish church of St Eustace, the two great edifices standing closely side by side. But even he was threatened with excommunication for a great debt of £40 (£733)—a promise towards the new reredos in the Cathedral—which he was ordered to pay at once, or else come under the ban. His successor Robert Bonus sadly belied his name—"iste abbas, qui dicebatur bonus, erat pessimus quasi hereticus," is Bishop Grandisson's comment. He flatly disobeyed his diocesan, made false statements and disregarded his solemn promises, and would not pay the dues to the Bishop or to the Pope. Also he wrongly claimed the patronage of Whitchurch, and, when at the Bishop's command the Abbot of Buckland arrived to induct David Aliam as vicar, he found the church-door barred, a stone wall built

* Bronescombe's *Register*, 266; *Abbots of Tavistock*, 148.

in front of it and a trench dug, and a band of armed men, whose ringleaders were six monks of Tavistock. Furthermore, the abbey property was suffering waste, the structure was dilapidated, and the inmates were setting their Rule at defiance. Consequently the Abbot was deposed, the monastery being placed under an interdict (A.D. 1333).

To fill the vacancy the monks agreed to place themselves in the Bishop's hands, and his choice fell on his cousin John de Courtenay, eldest son of the Earl of Devon, who as a young man had renounced his heirship in favour of his brother Hugh and taken the habit at Tavistock. But within a few years conditions were worse than ever before. The Abbot, who loved to wear the most secular attire and to indulge in hunting, kept hounds at the expense of the monastery, and let his monks lead dissolute lives, discipline being so relaxed that there were seldom more than two present at meals in the refectory. Also some of the conventual buildings had fallen, and others were becoming ruinous; and debts had accumulated to the enormous sum of £1,300 (£22,286), so that at times there was difficulty in providing enough food. Bishop Grandisson therefore decreed the suspension of the Abbot, and appointed sequestrators to administer the temporalities; though almost immediately after, as a weak concession to the Earl of Devon, who had evidently applied pressure on his brother's behalf, this salutary action was reversed (A.D. 1348). This Abbot died next year, when the Black Death was raging, but a couple of years later Abbot Richard de Esse confessed that the monastery was so hard hit by various misfortunes, that its recovery could hardly be hoped for by that generation.

Matters were not quite so bad in the days of Abbot Thomas Cullyng; but Bishop Brantyngham had to write at great length in 1387, strictly charging the community to render obedience to the regulations of the Benedictine Rule. Those regulations seem to have been commonly relaxed, a general spirit of worldliness showing itself in feastings in the town as well as in the monastery, and in the donning of secular attire such as capes and buttoned coats and beaked boots and linen shirts; and it was found necessary to command

the Abbot to restore or rebuild the dormitory and refectory and cloisters, and to complete the bell-tower that had been partly constructed. There followed yet another unsatisfactory Abbot, Thomas Mede (1422–1442), who was accused of simony, of neglect of discipline, and of making profit out of the conventual property by cutting down timber growing on the abbey estates.

All these cases must have proved a constant source of worry to the successive Bishops of Exeter, so that Tavistock Abbey was to them the most disappointing and the most troublesome of all the Religious Houses in the diocese; but more vexatious than any other was Richard Banham, who by crooked means flouted his diocesan and obtained exemption for his monastery. In 1505 Bishop Oldham's Visitation of the Abbey had been submitted to without opposition; but when, eight years later, the Abbot was cited to answer to a charge of contempt of episcopal authority, he replied by an appeal to Rome. The appeal was declared by the Bishop's commissioner to be frivolous, and he was suspended and subsequently excommunicated, but was absolved on his full and unconditional submission. On being released from the ban, however, he appealed to the Primate against the Bishop's claim to visitatorial authority; and, when the case was given against him, he carried on his appeal to Rome, and from the Pope obtained a bull, entirely exempting his monastery from all episcopal and archiepiscopal jurisdiction. Tavistock had already in 1458 become a mitred abbey, and in 1513 Henry VIII had granted to the Abbot the dignity of a seat in the House of Lords; and now in 1519 there came the most coveted privilege of all, and the monastery was freed from the control of the Diocesan.

If the fragmentary records of a great Religious House are mainly concerned with secular topics, such as landed properties and the building of premises and disputes with various magnates, this must not be matter of surprise; for it is but natural that chronicles should treat of such, rather than of the Church's spiritual and philanthropic work. But it is refreshing to be able to turn from more mundane matters, and to read of this Abbey being possessed of the first printing

press in Devon and the ninth in England, which in 1525 issued an English translation of Boëthius's *Consolation of Philosophy*, "emprented in the exempt monastery of Tavestoke in Denshyre, by me Dan Thomas Rychard, monke of the sayd monastery, to the instant desire of the right worshypful Esquyer, mayster Robert Langdon."*

The members of Totnes Priory would seem to have always been few in number, and one would have thought that they ought to have been sufficiently provided for, as they drew the rectorial tithes of Totnes and Broadclyst, and owned fairly valuable property at Ashprington, Brixham, Garston, Totnes, Folaton, and elsewhere, their income in 1337 being reckoned at £118 (£2,105). But the internal history of the Priory reveals a long continued state of want, due to the bad management, or worse, of the Priors. As early as 1317 Bishop Stapeldon had to reprimand severely Prior Jocelyn for neglect of residence. The next Prior, Robert de Conka, was reported for non-residence and for not providing hospitality, the explanation given being that the House was so burdened with debts that the brethren had scarcely enough to keep body and soul together. They were therefore unable to pay the Cardinal's procurations, or to provide office books for Totnes Parish Church; and the Prior could not liquidate a due of 32s., for which, if still unpaid, he was warned that he would have to appear before the Bishop. There followed twenty-five years' misrule, during which the daily Offices became very irregular, lay people and even women were allowed to converse with the brethren in the choir during the services, and the Prior's brother and nephew were suffered to keep horses and dogs and falcons as well as unnecessary servants within the conventual precincts at the great expense of the Priory. Therefore in 1348 the Prior was suspended by the Bishop from all administration of the temporalities.† This however did not end the trouble, and more than once in the following century evidence of financial

* Dugdale's *Monast.*, II, 489; *Monast. Exon.*, 89; *Episcopal Registers; Abbots of Tavistock*, 137, 267.

† Grandisson's *Register*, 58, 370, 443, 517, 542, 906, 1073.

stress is forthcoming.* But careless indifference must have been added to poverty, else in the fourteenth century the conventual church would surely have possessed a more generous apparatus than one full set of vestments, three old chasubles, three old copes, eleven chalices, two missals, two antiphonaries, two graduals, and one portfory.†

The little Benedictine Priory of St Gregory's at Modbury was an alien House, dependent on the Abbey of S. Pierre-sur-Dive in Normandy, and is thought to have been founded in the twelfth century by a member of the Valletort family, who were lords of Modbury for a couple of centuries from the time of *Domesday*. Its *personnel* consisted only of a prior and two monks, and after an uneventful history it was dissolved in 1442 by Henry VI, who bestowed its revenues on his College at Eton; and though for a while Tavistock Abbey had possession of it, it was soon restored to Eton again. The valuation taken at its suppression showed that it was enjoying an income of £70 (£1,062).‡

Otterton Priory was another small alien Benedictine House, belonging to the Abbey of Mont S. Michel in Normandy. The manor of Otterton was bestowed on that abbey by William the Conqueror, and this priory of four monks was founded some time between then and the reign of King John. As was usual with alien priories, this was for safety's sake taken into the custody of the English Government, whenever war was waging with France; and after one of these seizures it never regained its former status, but in 1415 Henry V handed it over, together with the churches of Otterton and Sidmouth and others appropriated to it, to Sion Abbey in Middlesex. To that House it belonged until the Dissolution of monasteries, when its revenues were £87 (£1,172). There are extant a large number of documents, chiefly concerned with the temporalities of the Priory, but its history is unimportant, and, save for some crumbling ruins near the church, its fabric has disappeared.§

* Stafford's *Register*, 351.

† Dugdale's *Monast.*, IV, 628; *Monast. Exon.*, 238; *Hist. of Totnes Priory*; *Trans. of Devon. Assoc.*, XII, 455.

‡ Dugdale's *Monast.*, VI, 1042; *Monast. Exon.*, 297.

§ Dugdale's *Monast.*, VI, 1033; *Monast. Exon.*, 248.

The early history of Pilton Priory has already been noticed, and its uneventful existence calls for no further comment here.

In Cornwall the only Benedictine monastery of any size was Bodmin Priory, and that was withdrawn from the category at an early date, for in 1107 it was refounded as an Augustinian House. In the Benedictine category Tywardreath ranked next in importance, and it marvellously well survived the troubles incident to its seizure by Government at the times of foreign wars. So affluent was it, that its possessions were valued at £266 (£4,853) in 1337, and it was able to find a pension of £20 (£278) for Prior Richard Marston, when he retired in 1506—generous sums for a small community, which at the former date had sleeping accommodation for only six monks besides the Prior, and which in Bishop Brantyngham's time numbered only five persons. Of its chattels there have been preserved an unusually numerous collection of charters, and two manuscript volumes—one a magnificent Psalter of the fourteenth century, and the other a composite work of the fifteenth, containing lists of monks' obits and of benefactors, homilies, a *martyrologium*, the Rule of St Benedict, and the offices used at the blessing of a religious habit and at the admission of a novice. In this last occurs this form of examination, the kneeling candidate being interrogated by the Prior, standing in the Chapter-house with the monks around him :—

Prior.—What desire ye ?

Novice.—To be mad broder.

Prior.—Ys hit yowr wyl and yow hertely desyre to be parte taker of all massis and prayers and almys dede done yn holy place, or schall be done here after ?

Novice.—Ye.

Prior.—Al so ys hit yowr wille to defende and to manteyne the righte of this holy plas to yowr power, where by God and Synt Androw may be the pesabeler (best abler) servyd by yowr worde and godewille, as a trewe broder otghte to do ?

Novice.—Ye.*

* Dugdale's *Monast.*, V, 654 ; *Monast. Exon.*, 33 ; H. Reynolds, 32.

A tiny foundation, placed in one of the most remote corners of the diocese, was Minster, also known as Talcarn, on the wild and bleak coast of North Cornwall, near Boscastle and Tintagel. Here in the reign of the second Henry was set by William Fitz-Nicholas his Priory of St Merthiana, which, like St Andrew's at Tywardreath, was an offshoot of the Abbey of St Sergius and St Bacchus at Angers. It was regarded as inferior to Tywardreath, and is even described as a cell dependent on that House; and one of its priors, William Bouges, was in 1333 moved on to St Andrew's by way of promotion. Minster soon passed under the patronage of the Botreaux family of Boscastle (or Botreauxcastle); but its existence did not extend much beyond two centuries, as it did not survive the seizures of alien priories during the wars of Henry IV. Its revenue and possessions were valued at £29 (£524) in 1333, when we are given an interesting insight into the composition of the farm of a small Religious House; and we can imagine that the time of the three or four inmates would be fairly well occupied by their devotions, together with the care of their stock. It was returned as owning 7 acres of wheat, 10 acres of barley, 30 acres of oats, 12 oxen, 3 cows, 3 calves, 12 pigs, 58 sheep, 40 lambs, 1 horse, 44 piglings, and 15 geese. Straw and hay they obtained as tithe from Minster, whose parish church was appropriated to them. Its last Prior was John de Stratton, who allowed the buildings to lapse into decay; whereupon Bishop Stafford sequestrated the revenues in 1402, after which it vanishes from the pages of history.*

A romantic but lonesome place for a monks' cell must have been Looe Island, which now also bears the name of St George's, though formerly that of St Michael's; and one cannot but wonder whether Glastonbury made use of St Michael's de Lammana as a place of practical banishment for refractory members; for it is a rocky islet, measuring a quarter of a mile each way, with half a mile of sea separating it from the coast of Talland parish. Certainly it once belonged to that great Abbey, and provided accommodation for two

* Dugdale's *Monast.*, VI, 1045; *Monast. Exon.*, 63; *Notitia Monastica*, Cornwall, 20; Stafford's *Register*, 188, 257.

persons. Of its history, however, the chroniclers have next to nothing to tell, save that Glastonbury held it in 1144, and maybe at an earlier date ; and that about a century later Richard, Earl of Cornwall, granted leave to the Abbot and monks of Glastonbury to let "the church and island of Lammana, its lands and possessions and all belonging to it," or, if they prefer, to sell them. From the lack of any mention of this little establishment in the *Episcopal Registers* it is inferred that the authorities took advantage of this latter permission, and St Michael's is heard of no more.*

An alien priory from the commencement, and in theory continuing so for long, St Michael's Mount nevertheless gained so independent a status, that it was not seized with others of like foundation during the French wars of the early fifteenth century ; and Henry V, with the approval of both Church and Parliament, transferred it to his newly erected nunnery of Sion in Middlesex. And, though afterwards granted to King's College at Cambridge, it was soon restored to Sion, and continued to be subject thereto till the Dissolution. This priory occupies no noteworthy place in history, and two glimpses that we get of its condition in the fourteenth century show us that it was poverty-stricken and scantily staffed—having only two brethren besides the prior, with a very inadequate supply of furniture and utensils. In its later days, however, it attained to greater prosperity : its chaplain was described as an archpriest ; possessed of various relics, it was a favourite place of pilgrimages ; and inventories of church goods prove that it was then fairly well provided, its independent status (being extra-diocesan) being marked by its use of Sarum, instead of Exeter, office-books.†

The Cluniac Order was the first reformation of the old Benedictine Rule, and an attempt to revive the simple severity of life, that had been the aim of the original movement, but had been so widely neglected. By origin a French Order, taking its rise in Burgundy early in the tenth century, it became exceedingly popular on the Continent, the Abbot

* Dugdale's *Monast.*, IV, 690 ; *Monast. Exon.*, 70.

† Dugdale's *Monast.*, VI, 988 ; *Monast. Exon.*, 28, 414 ; *Devon Notes and Queries*, VIII, 171.

of Cluny being the recognised head of all the daughter-houses, numbering some hundreds throughout Europe. The introduction of the Order into England was a consequence of the Norman Conquest, but the system was never much in favour in this insular and independent country, so that the Cluniac houses of England and Scotland at no time exceeded thirty-eight. Of these, four were in the diocese of Exeter—St Mary Magdalene's Priory at Barnstaple, Carswell Priory in the parish of Broadhembury, St James's Priory by Exeter, and the Priory of St Cyricus in the parish of St Veep in Cornwall.

Barnstaple Priory seems to have been a small and poorly endowed House. We read of its inmates numbering only six in 1279, and that was more than it had had previously; and in 1290 its income was as little as £3 6s. 8d. (£66 in modern value), this being the lowest of all the conventual houses in Devon. Towards the end of its career, however, it had improved its position, its income being £124 (£1,760); so that it was about equal in means to Frithelstock and Totnes, while the revenues of Pilton and Cornworthy were only half as much. Indeed its wealth must have increased very considerably, for in 1490 it was able to launch out with lavish expenditure on the funeral of Prior John Pylton, which cost over £40 (modern equivalent, £568). The details are interesting, as showing what was thought right to be done for the burial of the head of a small Religious House, the costliness of his coffin indicating that it was of stone:—

"Imprimis: We have payde out the sum of £14—8—6 for byldynge hys seypulture, and for makkin hys tumb, £14—8—6.

"Item: Mure, we have payede to the pryorey of Pyltone, and to the Muncks thir, to pray for his sole, £5—0—0.

"Item: Mure, we have payede for hys cuffyn, etc., the sum of £4, and to the Chauntrye ofe Synt Anne 8—8, £4—8—8.

"Item: Mure, wee have gyven away to pure of the Paroche of Barnestapoll, yn the Church of Synte Petrus ther on Sunday last, £2—3—4."*

* Dugdale's *Monast.*, V, 196; *Monast. Exon.*, 196; *Hist. of St Mary Mag., Barnstaple; Barnstaple Records*, I, 130; *Trans. of Devon. Assoc.*, XX, 383.

Carswell Priory has already been spoken of, and a few words suffice to notice the third Cluniac foundation in the diocese. A short distance outside Exeter city to the south-east, situated near the left bank of the River Exe, stood St James's Priory, a small community consisting of a prior and four monks. Its earliest patron was Baldwin de Redvers, Earl of Devon, the actual founder being apparently his *protégé* Walter son of Walward, who granted the site in the early part of the twelfth century. Like Barnstaple Priory it was subordinated to the Cluniac Abbey of St Martin's-in-the-Fields at Paris. It was but poorly endowed, but maintained an uneventful existence for three centuries (from about 1140 to 1444). Its condition, however, both spiritual and financial, sank to a very low level in the time of Bishop Grandisson, who felt himself obliged to excommunicate Prior Byttedene for neglect and absenteeism; and Prior Lesper, who took office in the year of the Black Death, found the place in a state of such destitution that it was impossible for him to keep residence there. Ultimately Henry VI ended its separate career by transferring the property to his newly founded King's College at Cambridge.*

The only other Cluniac foundation in the diocese was the Priory of St Cyricus, planted in the depths of the country near the River Fowey in the Cornish parish of St Veep. One cannot refrain from wondering what good result was expected by the authorities of Montacute Priory, when in the reign of Henry II or earlier they settled in that remote spot a prior and his two companions. Would those pioneers be able to snatch from their necessary farming and gardening labours sufficient leisure for the cultivating of the religious life? And would they, so far removed from inspiring and restraining influences without, remain true and faithful in the duty of representing to the Cornish folk the Christ-like character? Of that we have no means of judging; but we do know that they had a hard struggle, being terribly poor, even after the kindly Bishop Bruere in 1236 took pity on them and settled

* Dugdale's *Monast.*, V, 105; *Monast. Exon.*, 191; Grandisson's *Register*, 745; *Suburbs of Exeter*, 43; *Trans. of Devon. Assoc.*, XX, 383; *Devon Notes and Queries*, III, 186.

on the House a pension of £4 4s. 3d. (£99) from the revenue of the see. Anyhow, whether successful or not, the community continued to man that outpost for four centuries, till it was swept away by the ruthless spoliator.*

The Exeter diocese never had a Carthusian monastery; but of the Cistercians, the reformed Order of Benedictines, which was started at Citeaux in Burgundy in 1098 by the Englishman Stephen Harding, there were several important representatives. Simple in habit of life, in diet, and in dress, simple too in ritual, in music, and in worship, the Cistercians yet erected most beautiful church buildings, which they generally placed in sequestered nooks in the depths of the country. Waverley Abbey near Farnham in Surrey was their earliest settlement in England (1128), and within a few years there sprang up such famous Houses as Tintern, Rivaulx, and Fountains. The Order soon became popular in England, partly because of the severity of its system, partly because of the coveted privilege of exemption from episcopal control—conferred on the whole Order by the Pope; partly, too, because in course of time it became wealthy, chiefly through its encouraging sheep-breeding, whereby it made great profits by wool trade. At one time England had over a hundred Cistercian Houses, and in Devonshire the White Monks were to be found in Buckfast Abbey, Forde Abbey, Dunkeswell Abbey, Newenham Abbey (Axminster), and Buckland Abbey, but they had no footing in Cornwall.

Of the Devonshire Houses Buckfast Abbey is the one that has gone through most vicissitudes. Starting its career as a British monastery, it naturally in after times became subject to the Benedictine Rule; and then again somehow—the reason and method are not known—the site was conveyed in the twelfth century (1134) by Stephen, Earl of Mortain, to a colony of monks of the new Order from Savigny, and Buckfast became Cistercian, retaining most, if not all, of the property held by the former occupants. All that we know of this Abbey indicates that it was prosperous and also well accounted of. One fact that points in this direction is that this and Forde were two of the abbeys of the realm to whose

* Dugdale's *Monast.*, V, 172; *Monast. Exon.*, 69.

safe keeping—in the days when banks did not yet exist—King John entrusted his treasures of jewels and gold and silver, and the Patent Rolls for 1215 contain his instructions for the delivery to him of these valuables. Another proof is the somewhat unusual circumstance that the chronicles of this House contain no records of worldly life or culpable neglect on the part of the chief ruler—except in one instance, and even then matters were not very bad. The offender was William Beaghe, who became Abbot in 1415, and by his neglect and supineness allowed shocking laxity to embarras the administration of the House. The brethren, however, do not seem to have been infected by his slackness, as was not uncommonly the case elsewhere ; but rather they set themselves in opposition, and as a result a commission was appointed to put things right. It was charitably declared that the Abbot was too old and infirm to manage affairs, and therefore his independence of action was taken away, special powers being conferred on the prior and the brethren ; while sufficient allowance was made for all reasonable wants of the titular Head, whose chief fault would seem to have been careless extravagance. "Thus," adds the chronicler, "peace, faith, hope, and charity met together" ; and the half-shelved Abbot lived on for eleven years to enjoy his easy and irresponsible position.*

A strange and romantic story is that of the beginnings of Forde Abbey, the result of a curious chance—if the anonymous chronicler of the House is to be credited. The site first chosen was one in the parish of Okehampton, the founder being Richard de Brioniis. His father Baldwin, who was a distant relation of the Conqueror and had come with him from Normandy, had been granted the Honour of Okehampton, and was, after the King, the largest landowner in Devon, holding 177 manors (about 100,000 acres under cultivation), as well as being made Sheriff of Devon. He married Albreda, the King's niece, who bore him, besides other children, Richard and Adelicia, the former of whom inherited from his father

* Dugdale's *Monast.*, V, 384 ; *Monast. Exon.*, 371 ; *Buckfast Abbey*, 9, 12, 17 ; *Monumenta Bulfestrensia*, II, 3 ; *Cistercian Houses of Devon*, 56, 57, 63, 101 ; H. Reynolds, 35.

lands at Okehampton. This Richard, being a religious man, as well as a brave warrior, gave to the Cistercians some land called Brightley, pleasantly situated in the valley of the Ockment, about a mile and a half north of Okehampton, and petitioned the Abbot of Waverley to supply the inmates. Three years were spent in erecting the necessary buildings, and then in 1136 Abbot Richard and twelve monks arrived and took up their residence. A year later they had completed the edifice, in which they buried the bodies of the founder and the first abbot, who both died that same year.

Five years after the occupation of Brightley, Adelicia, who had inherited her brother's property, and was residing on her manor of Thorncombe, beheld one day a procession of thirteen monks, marching eastwards through her estate with cross at their head; and, on interrogating them, she found that they were the community from Brightley, who, finding the soil barren and food scarce, had abandoned their settlement and were on their way back to Waverley. Overcome with disappointment and sorrow, she invited them to make their home instead on her manor of Thorncombe, which, as she pointed out, was fertile and well wooded and fruitful. This they did, and, after occupying for a while her house at Westford, they removed into new quarters erected for them at a place then known as Hertbath, but afterwards called Forde, which, though now in Dorset, was till 1842 in a detached portion of Devon, six miles north-east of Axminster. Ere long the Courtenays became by right of inheritance patrons of the abbey, which soon grew to prosperity under their protection, drawing its revenues from Axminster, Luppitt, Lynton, Countisbury, Pelynt, and other places both within and without the Exeter diocese.

Bishop Bronescombe met with many occurrences that called for the exercise of discipline, but most extraordinary and outrageous was the conduct of William de Crukerne, Abbot of Forde. The history of the case opens during the meeting of a great council of clergy of Exeter and the county of Devon, who assembled in the city in July 1275 to deliberate on the best means of assisting the Crusades. Thereat Abbot Crukerne and John Noble, Dean of Exeter, arose, and made

protestation that they were not guilty of a charge that had been preferred against them, namely, that they had published an excommunication against their Bishop. No hint is given as to any reason for such excommunication, but their action is certainly suspicious; and by their words they make it appear that they had not been accused without reason, for they declared that, if there had seemed to be ground for thus charging them, they now withdraw what they said. Four months later the Abbot was cited to appear before the Bishop at Exeter to answer an alleged infringing of his Lordship's sequestration of Ottery St Mary, and that maybe was the *casus belli* of the two parties. Anyhow the matter reached its crisis in the following May, when we find the Abbot lying under the curse of excommunication because of his "manifestae offensae et multiplicatae contumaciae"; and as he has disregarded the ban ("cum ipse in malicia sua perseverans maledicionem bibat ut aquam et hujusmodi excommunicacionem diucius sustinuerit animo indurato"), the Official General is commanded to have the sentence published every Sunday and Holy Day in the Cathedral and in all conventual and collegiate and parish churches in the city and diocese, with the ringing of the bells and the dashing of lighted candles on the ground, until he repent, "in order that the Lord's flock, that has been committed to our care, may not incur greater danger by communicating with the said abbot." Nor was the angered prelate satisfied therewith, but, inasmuch as the Abbot was often in that diocese, he wrote to the Bishop of Bath and Wells, begging him to adopt the same method; and he even called upon the King to back up the Church's authority by exercising his civil power, which his Majesty consented to do by the issue of a Royal Writ.

The matter having thus grown from diocesan to national import, the Abbots of the Cistercian Order had their say—not indeed defending their brother of Forde Abbey, for his case would hardly admit of that, but petitioning the King in Parliament at Winchester to withdraw his Writ, on the ground that the Bishop of Exeter had exceeded his rights and encroached on the privileges of their Order. Meanwhile the Abbey was suffering severely, as in consequence of the

excommunication no one could be persuaded to cultivate the land or reap the crops or grind the corn, so that the inmates were threatened with starvation ; nor would anyone incur risk by defending their case in either the civil or the ecclesiastical courts. Under these circumstances the King, who was longing for a cessation of strife and was desirous that the dispute should be settled by the authorities of the Church, with the consent of both parties appointed as mediators the Dean of Salisbury and the Archdeacon of Dorset, who were both Doctors of Civil and Canon Law.

When the case came on, the Abbot of Forde of his own motion lodged the enormous sum of £500 (£10,312 in modern value) in the hands of the Bishop as damages, and submitted himself to the ruling of the mediators, offering to produce more money, if required. Judgment was given at Westminster on May 1st, 1277, and went entirely in favour of the Bishop. The Abbot was publicly to withdraw and have withdrawn his excommunication of the Bishop—which he had issued—wherever it had been published, and was to do this personally in Exeter Cathedral, declaring it null and void ; and he was also to disclaim all his offences against the Bishop. The damages were assessed at a thousand marks (£13,736), and his excommunicate accomplices were to walk, bare-headed, bare-footed, and ungirdled, through the Close at Exeter to the door of the Cathedral, where they were to accept whatever punishment and penance the Bishop might be pleased to fix. Thus ended this strange case, which left the injured party altogether triumphant ; but we should like to know what it was that prompted the Abbot to act so wrongly, and so unwisely.*

Three men of fame were Abbots of Forde. The first was Baldwin, who gave up the office of Archdeacon of Exeter in favour of the conventual life, and after a few years as a monk at Forde was elevated to the abbacy. Thence he went to Worcester as Bishop, and three years later was translated to Canterbury ; but, filled with martial spirit, he joined Richard I as a Crusader, and ended a six years' primacy at Acre in 1191. Abbot John, surnamed Devonius, was a

* Bronescombe's *Register*, 84-91.

friend of King John, and filled the difficult post of confessor to that monarch. He was a theological scholar, and made Forde famous by his learning. The third was Thomas Chard, who, besides holding a large number of other ecclesiastical appointments—*e.g.*, he was Warden of the College at Ottery, Vicar of Wellington, and Prior of Montacute—was coadjutor to Bishops Oldham and Veysey.*

In a retired and fertile valley eight miles north of Honiton —such a site as the Cistercians always endeavoured to select— William, Lord Brewer, in 1201 built his abbey of Dunkeswell, dedicating its church, as was the regular custom of that Order, in the name of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Dunkeswell was in some degree a daughter of Forde, for that was the mother-house that provided a company of monks to colonize the new foundation, which was distant from it only about a dozen miles. The founder endowed his abbey with lands at Dunkeswell, Wolford, and Uffculme ; and local magnates added to his benefactions, Forde Abbey taking the lead. Later, his nephew and namesake, then Bishop of Exeter, conferred on it the appropriations of the churches of Dunkeswell and St David's, Doddeton (near Aylesbeare) ; and it is in connection with the latter that the annals of the House furnish almost the only interesting incident in its monastic history. After holding that church only a few years, the monks deprived the people of their services by shutting it up, removed the bells and the font, and used the land for their own agricultural profit. Bishop Bronescombe therefore cited the Abbot and brethren to appear before him, and on their submission to his ruling, ordered the place to be restored to its former state, and daily services to be performed again. Lord Brewer had already founded a Premonstratensian abbey at Torre and also the Hospital of St John at Bridgewater ; but Dunkeswell was honoured above the others, for he chose that as the place of his interment, and was buried in the choir in 1227, having spent his last days within its walls as a professed monk.†

* Dugdale's *Monast.*, V, 376 ; *Monast. Exon.*, 338 ; *Cistercian Houses of Devon*, 171 ; *Rivers of Devon*, 60.

† Dugdale's *Monast.*, V, 679 ; *Monast. Exon.*, 393 ; *Cistercian Houses of Devon*, 159 ; *Devon Notes and Queries*, VIII, 8, 34.

One mouldering wall in a meadow by the Axe a little south of Axminster is all that is left of the once splendid Newenham Abbey, whose church, 260 feet long and 152 feet from end to end of the transepts, took thirty years to build, and held the tombs of many Mohuns and Bonvilles and other illustrious benefactors. The brothers Reginald and William Mohun, whose father Reginald had gained large property by his marriage with one of the five heiress daughters of William, Lord Brewer, were co-operative founders, the scheme being William's, and the grant of the site Reginald's. A start was made in 1247, when there came from Beaulieu Abbey in Hampshire the newly chosen Abbot with twelve professed and four lay brothers, who arrived at the spot on the festival of the Epiphany, singing "*Salve Regina*," and were received by the Mohuns and a great assembly of people. Corner stones were formally placed in position by the brothers, and the work of completing the buildings was put in hand.

We might have expected so favoured a foundation to enjoy a happy and prosperous existence. It ought to have derived constant encouragement from Beaulieu, with which a close connection was maintained, and whence most of its abbots were drawn. Nor did it suffer from the isolation that must have been a sore trial to many monasteries; for Forde Abbey was only half-a-dozen miles away, while Dunkeswell was within twice that distance, so that a Cistercian triad were near neighbours. But the history of the House reveals a succession of difficulties and troubles; and it is a remarkable fact—which seems to indicate that the post was not a desirable one—that during the first ninety-two years of the Abbey's existence there were completed no less than fifteen tenures of office, of which as many as eleven were terminated by resignation, only three abbots dying in harness, and one being deprived.

One disagreeable cause of friction was the advowson of Axminster, in which parish the Abbey stood. The founder's family had bestowed the privilege on Newenham, but for many years there was a contention for its possession between the Crown, the Abbey, and the Chapter of York—who for

some years after the Conquest had drawn a pension from the emoluments. Ultimately York gained the patronage together with the rectorial tithes and extensive lands, and both Beaulieu and Newenham were so aggrieved with Richard de Chichester for his ill management of the case that he was deprived of his abbacy (1293). It has to be added that there were more serious counts against the Abbot, for not only was he charged with involving the House in debt, but there was even mention of sensuality and irreligion.*

Chichester's successor was so happy as to be able to liquidate the debts, but not long afterwards Abbot John de Cokiswille had to prove himself a benefactor to the monastery in a like difficulty; and another misfortune was a mysterious revolution, which changed the whole *personnel* of the House, the brethren being displaced in order to make way for a new lot of occupants. Abbot John Legga, too, had a troublous time. It was a minor though expensive worry, when he had to sue the Vicar of Axminster and two others for trespass and appropriating fish valued at £20 (£322), besides hares, rabbits, pheasants, and partridges; but it was a more serious affair when he had to complain to Parliament that Sir Philip Courtenay, M.P. for Devon, had imprisoned him and two of his monks. The reason for this high-handed action is not known, but as Sir Philip was unable to justify his procedure, he was committed to the Tower for a while. Poor Abbot Leonard Houndalre was even more unfortunate, for he was kidnapped by six men belonging to Cullompton, Bradninch, Clyst, and Honiton, who stole goods of his, worth £40 (£636), and actually carried him off to Bickleigh, where they ill-treated him and kept him a prisoner, until he purchased his release by the payment of £10 (£159). Yet another case in which Newenham was a sufferer was that concerning the appropriation of the benefice of Luppitt. This was the cause of long litigation with the Carew family; and when at last the Abbot had vindicated his claim, he kept the bulk of the revenue for the monastery, and allowed a mere pittance to the vicar, so that the Archbishop had to take action and

* *Monast. Exon.*, 318, 357; *Hist. of Newenham Abbey*, 57; *Cistercian Houses of Devon*, 140.

require the granting of a more generous stipend. However, the Abbey's fortunes were not shattered by all these evils, and it was sufficiently prosperous to entertain Henry VII for nearly a week in 1497, when he was on his return journey from Exeter, where he had been hanging some rebels of the Perkin Warbeck rising.*

One more Cistercian Abbey in Devon, and one of the latest in England, was Buckland, which was founded in 1280 by Amicia, Countess of Devon, not far from the left bank of the River Tavy, and midway between Tavistock and its confluence with the Tamar. This lady was highly connected, being a daughter of Gilbert de Clare, Earl of Gloucester and Hertford, and widow of Baldwin de Redvers, seventh Earl of Devon ; and her daughter Isabella was a great heiress, being not only the widow of William de Fortibus, Earl of Albemarle, but also, in succession to her brother Baldwin, Countess of Devon and Lady of the Isle of Wight. From her the mother obtained the site for the abbey, and from Quarr Abbey in that island (which owed its foundation to a former Earl of Devon) were brought monks to form the new community at Buckland. On arrival they were guilty of a strange act of omission, for they presumed to perform their services without having obtained the requisite episcopal licence, and consequently Bishop Bronescombe laid the place under the ban of his interdict. However the good offices of Queen Eleanor were secured, and on her petition the Diocesan granted a temporary permission, which was to hold good "until we shall have had personal conference with our Lady the Queen." Three months later he was in London, but apparently failed to get his desired audience, for he merely extended the time ; but after two months more, when he was on his death-bed at Bishop's Teignton, he withdrew his interdict entirely—his last official act before the end of his career, for he died on that same day.†

The new Abbey was only fairly well endowed with the manors and advowsons of Buckland (afterwards distinguished

* Dugdale's *Monast.*, V, 690 ; *Monast. Exon.*, 358 ; *Hist. of Newenham Abbey*, 59, 68, 82, 89, 95 ; *Cistercian Houses of Devon*, 151, 152.

† Bronescombe's *Register*, 39.

as Buckland Monachorum), Bickleigh, Walkhampton, and Cullompton, and the lordship of the Hundred of Roborough, which included East Stonehouse—first coming into notice in the fifteenth century. It enjoyed also the appropriations of the churches of Buckland, Walkhampton, Sheepstor, Bickleigh, and Bampton. Its history was uneventful, and its chronicles are happily free from anything that could be considered discreditable to the inmates. There is record of grievous damage incurred, to the enormous extent of £642 (£12,000), by the operations of miners of Edward II in their digging for silver on the conventual estates, for which compensation had to be allowed. Edward III gave his licence for the fortifying of the House—a wise safeguard in an age when French raids might be expected. There was a quarrel with the Abbot of Tavistock, whose forester had suffered assault in a supposed act of trespass by the men of Buckland, but the summons against them ended in their acquittal. In a case against the Lord of the Manor of Stonehouse they were successful in their contention that he had erred in setting up a pillory and tumbrel and holding a court of frank-pledge, and James Derneford had to pay them a fine of £20 (£300).

An interesting revelation of one branch of conventual work is afforded by an agreement made by Abbot Thomas Whyte in 1522 with Robert Derkeham, organist. The latter is to assist in the services in the choir daily, and to teach the art of music and organ-playing to the boys and to any monks who may like to learn, and also to have the education of four boys of the Abbey. For this he is to receive £2 13s. 4d. (£36) and a 12s. gown and thirty horse-loads of faggots each year, a house, a furnished room in the Abbey, five ounces of bread and a quart of beer every night, and a wax candle each evening from November 1st to February 2nd. The emoluments seem rather small, compared with those of a schoolmaster-organist of the present time, and the provision of light is suggestive of a very early retiring to rest.*

While the popularity of the original Benedictine system was waning and the Cistercians were still in full favour,

* Dugdale's *Monast.*, V, 712; *Monast. Exon.*, 380; *Cistercian Houses of Devon*, 8, 41.

the Augustinians began to come to the fore. They were known as canons regular, which implied a difference in principle from the secular canons of the Rule of St Chrodegang; and in outward appearance they were distinguished from the older Regular Orders, for they wore caps and allowed their beards to grow. In essentials, however, they were in accord with fully professed monks; for their Rule, drawn from the writings of St Augustine of Hippo, agreed in all important features with that of St Benedict. This phase of religious life reached England in the earlier part of the twelfth century, the first foundation being St Osyth's in Essex, which was soon followed by Plympton, Leicester, and Walsingham, and also by Carlisle, where the Cathedral of the newly formed diocese was staffed with Black or Austin Canons. The movement spread widely in England, and at the time of the Suppression there were a hundred and seventy-three Houses of this Order, eleven of which were in the Exeter diocese.*

First in dignity, as being an abbey, was Hartland, which had been not only a follower of the old Benedictine Rule, but also a representative of the English nationalist cause. Consequently the Conquest robbed the Abbey of its estates, which were held for a while by the King, and then by Rufus were bestowed on the Dynham family, whose provenance was Dinant in Brittany. One of these, Geoffrey de Dynham, about the year 1170 with the licence of Henry II converted Gytha's foundation into an Abbey of Austin Canons, mainly by the help of Richard Toclive, Archdeacon of Poitiers and soon afterwards (1174) Bishop of Winchester. Endowment was provided by the appropriation of the churches of Hartland, Woolfardisworthy, Fremington, Knowstone, Molland, Brushford, and Forrabury, to which were afterwards added Welcombe, Marhamchurch, and Launcells; and so affluent was the Abbey under the management of Abbot John of Exeter, the builder of the cloisters, that the community was increased to fourteen. But in the same letter in which Bishop Stapeldon sanctioned this expansion and commended

* G. G. Perry, I, 215; *Church in England*, Overton, I, 188; H. O. Wakeman, 172.

the Abbot's goodness and diligence, he also had much to say about irregularities and neglect. He had just been there on Visitation, and had found the dormitory nearly in ruins, the choir of the church dark, the tower badly roofed, the lavatory ill-managed, no recreation-room provided, and books wanting. He was shocked, too, by discovering that pigs were allowed to run about within the conventual precinct; and more satisfactory arrangements were needed with regard to the oversight of landed property, the auditing of accounts, the care of sick members, and the conduct of servants. These abuses were to be set right, and in case of failure to do so, a heavy fine—in one case £10 (£188) and in another £40 (£752)—was to be paid to the Cathedral building fund.*

Frithelstock Priory, two miles west of Torrington, was both by proximity and by constitution closely connected with Hartland Abbey; for not only did Robert Beauchamp obtain from the latter the complement of a prior and four canons, when he founded the Priory in 1220, but it was ordained that for the election of a new ruler the Abbot and one canon might always be present and vote at Frithelstock, and the Prior of Frithelstock might act likewise at Hartland. This House, dedicated in the name of St Gregory, was endowed —not very amply—with the manors and benefices of Frithelstock and Week St German's and the manor of Kyngdon. The Stapeldons, whose home was at Annery in the adjoining parish of Monkleigh, and who were generous benefactors of the Priory, gave the manor of Broadwoodwidger; and Bishop Grandisson in 1334 added the appropriation of that church in response to a petition from the convent, in which complaint of poverty was made. This benefaction was expected to increase the community very largely, for nine extra canons at least and two secular brethren, one of whom was to be in Holy Orders, were to raise their number to sixteen; a stipulation being made that every day was to be sung a Mass of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and to be said a Mass for the souls of Bishop Walter Stapeldon, his brother Sir Richard Stapeldon, and Bishop Thomas Bytton.

* Dugdale's *Monast.*, VI, 435; *Monast. Exon.*, 205; Stapeldon's *Register*, 171; *Farthest from Railways*, 14.

Some few years later we meet with a case of astonishing imprudence on the part of a prior and of lamentable exercise of episcopal authority. Richard de Bittendene erected a chapel in the grove beyond the enclosure, and presumed to hold services there without having it consecrated by the Bishop. Consequently there came a mandate from Exeter with peremptory orders from Bishop Grandisson to have the edifice razed to the ground (A.D. 1351).

A more necessary act of discipline was performed by Bishop Stafford in 1400, when as a result of his Visitation he found the Priory almost reduced to a state of desolation owing to the bad government of Prior John Pynnok. However he humbly and entirely submitted himself to the Bishop's judgment, and thereby escaped deposition. But the case was so serious that the administration of the temporalities was committed to Thomas Rede, one of the canons, with two others as his assistants; and they were to keep monthly accounts, and report to his Lordship annually. As a punishment and also as a measure of economy, the Prior was to take his meals in the refectory with the others, except when distinguished guests were there, and he was to be allowed only one servant. It is evident that the maladministration of the Head had encouraged laxity in the members, for the Bishop had to demand strict obedience to the Rule, and even found it necessary to forbid hunting, indulgence in festivities, and drinking in improper places and after compline. This arrangement continued for more than sixteen years, and then on the Prior's death the said Thomas Rede was elected in his place, at which time however the community seems to have consisted of four members only.*

Unlike so many of the Religious Houses of the diocese, Plympton stood by a high road—the chief thoroughfare from London and Exeter to Plymouth; and consequently the calls on its hospitality by wayfarers were numerous, and constituted a serious burden on its finances. This was recognised by outside authorities, and led Bishop Bronescombe in 1261 to appropriate to it the church of Dean Prior "ad

* Dugdale's *Monast.*, VI, 484; *Monast. Exon.*, 219; Stafford's *Register*, 107; *Hist. of Devon.*, Worth, 158; *Rivers of Devon*, 292.

pauperum et peregrinorum ad vos confluentium necessitatem sublevandam."* Bishop Grandisson, too, in 1338 added the church of Newton St Cyres in response to the petition of the monks, who set forth that the number of visitors had become so large, chiefly in consequence of the nearness of the ever-growing port of Plymouth, that they found themselves obliged to give away their own food, or else risk incurring anger or even injury from these travelling people; so that they knew not how to maintain the full complement of the House without being in want. The difficulty pressed even more hardly in the sixteenth century, for then many of the guests belonged to the upper classes, and consequently were more expensive to entertain. Bishop Oldham therefore, as a result of his first Visitation in 1505, arranged that Prior David Bercle should withdraw from Plympton for a while, until the debts could be cleared off and a more economical system be adopted.

Meanwhile Plymouth was becoming too large and important a place to be dependent on Plympton Priory, and aspired to gain a charter as an incorporated town. The inhabitants began to be represented in Parliament in 1298, and soon after that date there is evidence of a government by *prepositi* or mayors, though the formal incorporation of the borough was not granted till 1439. Then the Convent of Plympton petitioned Bishop Lacy to grant his licence for them to transfer to the Mayor and Commonalty of Plymouth their interest in certain lands, tenements, franchises, fairs, markets, mills, rents, and services; and, on his consenting, the offer of Plymouth to purchase these for an annual payment of £41 (£622) was accepted.†

Plympton had a small dependent cell, situated within easy sight of the Cathedral city, only a mile from Exe Bridge, and within the limits of the parish of Alphington. So insignificant was this Priory of St Mary de Marisco—commonly known as Marsh Barton—that its very origin is unrevealed, and it never gained a place in the pages of history. Indeed

* *Register*, 65.

† Dugdale's *Monast.*, VI, 51; *Monast. Exon.*, 129; *Hist. of Devon.*, Worth, 201, 230.

almost the only mention of it is a passing reference, contained in a letter addressed to Bishop Robert Warelwast by Ralph de Avenel, a benefactor of Plympton Priory.*

There is but little to be said of the Priory of Augustinian Canons at Ipplepen, situated on the high ground midway between Newton Abbot and Totnes. In *Domesday* times the manor of Ipplepen was held by Ralph de Felgeriis (or Fougères), and at an early date one of his family handed over the patronage of that church to the Convent of Fougères, not far from Rennes in Brittany ; then as an offshoot of that House Ipplepen Priory came into existence, the first actual record of it being in the year 1274. There has been preserved a detailed account of the careful and thorough inquisition that was held in 1350 concerning Roger Clappishale before his institution to the rectory, which was customarily held together with the priorship. It is of interest to know that his fitness as a candidate consisted in his being " a freeman and born in wedlock, efficient and of good life, a man of pleasant address, over twenty-five years of age and already in Orders as an acolyte, and not beneficed elsewhere." About a century later Bishop Lacy was able to arrange for the church to be appropriated to St Mary's College at Ottery. After that the Priory disappears from history, though it seems to have continued to exist till the Dissolution.†

Close to the north-east boundary of Devon, on the sunny side of the watershed that parts the basin of the Exe from Somerset, and nearly four hundred feet above sea-level, was built the Priory of Canonsleigh, whose name is equivalent to " the meadow of the Canons," though its ancient designation took the form of " Canonleigh." It owed its inception to Walter de Claville, who shortly before 1173 established here in the parish of Burlescombe a community of Austin Canons. He belonged to a Devonshire family, for the Clavilles in the time of *Domesday* owned Dowland.‡ Somehow—the explanation is not known—this House was closely connected

* *Monast. Exon.*, 133.

† Dugdale's *Monast.*, VI, 1046 ; *Monast. Exon.*, 300, and *Addit. Supp.*, 25 ; Grandisson's *Register*, 1,407.

‡ *Monast. Exon.*, 226 ; *Domesday*, I, f. 112*b*.

with Plympton Priory, the Prior of the latter having the right to be present in person or by deputy at the election of a Prior of the former, though not allowed to vote. It was also enacted that if the brethren of Canonsleigh could not agree to elect one of themselves, they were to seek a candidate at Plympton; and further, that, if disorders in their House could not be quelled by their own officials, the Prior of Plympton was to be called in. These ordinances, agreed on in 1219, indicate some measure of subordination to the older House.

We have no record to tell us the reason for the change, but in 1284 Bishop Quivel ejected the Prior and his canons, and in their place installed a community of ladies of the same Order. The deprived Prior endeavoured to regain his position by appealing to the Primate, Archbishop Peccham, who wrote on his behalf both to the King and also to Vice-Chancellor William de Hamilton. But this correspondence, which speaks of the wrongful removal of the canons by means of false accusation, and of the imprisonment of the Prior by his diocesan, fails to convince us that so excellent a man as Bishop Quivel had been swayed by unworthy motives. On the contrary, it seems to show that matters had gone very badly within the walls of the Priory; and the fact that he visited the place three times in the summer of 1283, spending as long a time as eleven days on his second Visitation, suggests that he strove hard to bring about a reformation, but found the evil was too deeply rooted. Anyhow, the appeal failed, and the new inmates, contemptuously dubbed "mulierculae" in the letters, remained in possession. The new head was granted the title of Abbess, and to the former dedication—the Blessed Virgin Mary and St John the Evangelist—was added the name of St Etheldreda.

But the deprived Prior's attempt was more serious than mere correspondence—he brought an action against the Bishop, Countess Matilda de Clare, the Abbess (Matilda de Tablers), and Peter de Insula, Archdeacon of Exeter, charging them with having entered his priory with an armed force, and carried away his goods and chattels, and imprisoned and maltreated the brethren. The stolen possessions, which were said to include books, vestments, charters, and the

conventual seal, he assessed at the enormous sum of £1,000—a manifest exaggeration—but the Abbess was able to produce letters from the Pope and the Bishop confirming her appointment, and the case came to naught.

Matilda de Clare was Countess of Gloucester and Hertford, and she had become patroness and a generous benefactress of the abbey, bestowing on it the sum of 600 marks (equivalent to £18,000) as well as the manors of Northleigh, Rockbeare, Okeford, Dunsford, Manningtree in Essex, and Godleford in Suffolk. To these were added by Bishop Bytton the appropriation of Sampford Arundell, by Bishop Stapeldon that of Dunsford, and by Bishop Grandisson that of Rockbeare; and others appropriated were Okeford and Dowland in Devonshire, and Morden in Dorset. When initial difficulties had been surmounted, the abbey seems to have enjoyed a prosperous career.*

The canonesses of Cornworthy appear always to have suffered financial stress, and consequently consideration was shown them by their usually being exempted from paying the King's tenths. The history of the priory is almost a blank, save for their lack of religious tone in their latter days, which brought on them severe strictures from Bishop Veysey.†

Of the three chief religious foundations in Cornwall, St German's, Launceston, and Bodmin—all of them ultimately Augustinian priories—the first-named, though the poorest, enjoyed the highest prestige, partly because it had contained the chair of the Cornish Bishops, and partly because the Bishops of Exeter were there so frequently, their manor of Cuddenbeak being close to the Priory. In the twelfth century, however, this community of secular canons had fallen into discredit on account of their irregular mode of living; so Bishop Bartholomew, in whose opinion they were "scarcely worthy of the Church of Christ, and but little removed from utter worldliness," converted the establishment into a Priory

* Dugdale's *Monast.*, VI, 333; *Monast. Exon.*, 224; *Trans. of Devon. Assoc.*, XXIV, 359; *Devon Notes and Queries*, VIII, 104; Bronescombe's and Quivel's *Registers*, 41, 318, 344.

† Dugdale's *Monast.*, VI, 550; *Monast. Exon.*, 236.

of Canons Regular of the Order of St Augustine. The transformation was not completed when Bartholomew died, but Archbishop Baldwin confirmed his deed, so the refoundation is to be dated between 1184 and 1190. The conventual church was rebuilt soon after, and the present nave and aisles and two western towers belong to that time. The choir was consecrated by Bishop Bronescombe in 1261, but this has not survived. In the Middle Ages the south aisle was assigned to the parishioners for their worship, the canons appointing a chaplain or parish priest, removable at their will.

Though there were no events of real importance in the fortunes of this House, there were plenty of exciting occurrences, which would relieve the conventual life of monotony. For instance, Bishop Stapeldon at his Visitation in 1315 discovered an abuse—Brother Henry was a pluralist, holding the office of chamberlain as well as that of prior ; so a mandate followed, ordaining that the two posts must be separated. Then in 1328 Bishop Grandisson was confronted with a disagreeable case, for his bailiff at Cuddenbeak had murdered or compassed the death of some of his *employés*. This involved a careful inquisition, followed by the open excommunication of the offender, and the publication of his absolution by the Prior when he submitted himself to discipline.*

Another episcopal Visitation in 1400 revealed serious corruptions. Four of the canons were found to be guilty of scandalous and immoral conduct ; so Bishop Stafford had to pass sentence, which was severe indeed, though the details are ludicrous and childish. Their open penance included sitting on the floor in the middle of the Refectory for meals for a number of Fridays with a diet of bread and water, and close confinement to the choir and cloister for three or twelve months ; and refusal to conform was to be punished by incarceration in the conventual prison. The standard of life must have sadly deteriorated for such things to be possible ; and a further revelation is forthcoming only four years later, when another of the canons, who was then Prior-elect, had to present himself in Exeter Cathedral to purge

* Grandisson's *Register*, 373, 379, 416, 418.

himself from the sin of adultery, and six years after had to appear in Liskeard Church for a like purpose.*

The chronicles do not contain anything very important concerning the history of the priory at Launceston, but the general impression that we gain is that it occupied a good position in Church and county. Kings and other great men were sufficiently interested to grant it charters or privileges. It had a chapel in Dunheved Castle, and received twenty shillings annually from the Provost, the borough also paying dues to the sum of £3 5s. 10d. Bishops Bronescombe and Stapeldon held Ordinations within its walls. Its rebuilt church with two altars was dedicated by the latter prelate in 1318, and Grandisson consecrated the cemetery of St Thomas's in the conventual precincts. In the course of time it received the endowments of a number of churches—Launceston (St Mary Magdalene's), St Stephen's-by-Launceston, St Thomas's-by-Launceston, Boyton, Egloskerry, St Giles-in-the-Heath, Laneast, Lewannick, Tamerton, Tresmere, and Werrington, all of them in the neighbourhood. Other more distant ones were Stratton, Poughill, St Gennys, St Juliot, Liskeard, Linkinhorne, and Talland. Around the mother-house sprang up a number of chapels, dedicated to St Katharine, St Gabriel, St James, St John of Bridlington, St Margaret, and St Thomas-the-Martyr, so that St Stephen's Priory ought to have been a centre of widespread religious influence. In the early years of the fifteenth century, when maybe was the high-water mark of its prosperity, the community consisted of a prior, a subprior, and twelve canons, all of them in priests' Orders ; and in recognition of its status Bishop Oldham a century later gave licence for amices of grey fur to be worn during divine service and in processions, thus ranking the inmates with the canons of Exeter Cathedral and the great collegiate churches.†

Bodmin was remarkable for the lengthy tenures of office enjoyed by its priors, one of the most notable being John

* Dugdale's *Monast.*, II, 467 ; *Monast. Exon.*, 1,409 ; Stafford's *Register*, 314.

† Dugdale's *Monast.*, VI, 210 ; *Monast. Exon.*, 21, 412 ; *Launceston and Dunheved*, 1-36 ; Stafford's *Register*, 237.

de Kylkhampton, who ruled for nearly forty years, before the Black Death carried him off. He incurred censure from Bishop Stapeldon because he continued the usual services for two years, although his church had been desecrated by bloodshed. The Diocesan came in person and performed the rite of reconciliation, but the community was mulcted in the heavy penalty of £20 (£379). Worse than carelessness occurred later on, for Grandisson had to reprimand the Prior and brethren severely for their laxity in discipline, and for allowing the House to be burdened with great debts. It was necessary to lay the strictest commands on them in order to recall them to due obedience to their Rule—the devotional life must be resumed, worldly display in dress must be abandoned, the keeping of hounds must cease, valuable time must not be wasted in games of chance, and there must be no more consorting with undesirable persons, especially women. Kylkhampton's successors were not all of them quite satisfactory, but in Lacy's time the Priory seems to have regained a good reputation for regularity of life, for hospitality, and for charity to the poor. Mention is made elsewhere of Prior Thomas Vivian, assistant bishop to Veysey. He died in 1533, and there is still extant his monument, which Leland described as "a high tumbe of a very darkesche gray marble."*

The little Priory of St Anthony-in-Roseland, where, according to Leland, "of late dayes lay two chanons of Plymptoun Priory,"† was placed in one of the most inaccessible corners of the diocese, near the extremity of a long and narrow peninsula, which stretches southwards on the other side of the harbour from Falmouth. There is next to nothing known of it, save that it was endowed with the appropriated churches of St Anthony and St Gerrans, and that it was burnt down by the French in 1338, thereby causing much anxiety to the mother-house because of the expense of restoring it. It survived to share the common fate of the other Religious Houses at the hands of Henry VIII.‡

* *Monast. Exon.*, 15, 410; Stapeldon's *Register*, 276; Grandisson's *Register*, 1,009.

† *Itinerary*, 322.

‡ *Monast. Exon.*, 134.

Of the Premonstratensian Order—that variant of the Augustinian, which took its rise in 1121 at Premonstre in Picardy, being started by Norbert as an attempt to unite preaching and the cure of souls with the monastic life—the sole representative in the diocese was Torre Abbey. The new movement had reached England only a quarter of a century after its first inception, and, if Welbeck was the chief of the thirty-five Houses of this foundation in England, Torre was the wealthiest. Originally the rules were very exacting, including the total prohibition of flesh meat, and of the use of linen, but these were afterwards considerably relaxed.*

William, Lord Brewer, could hardly have chosen a more attractive and delightful spot for his Abbey; for Torre is beautifully placed on a gentle slope by the coast of Torbay, with rising ground behind to shelter it from the north and east. Here in 1196 he set his abbot and six canons, brought from Welbeck in Nottinghamshire, and gave them a new home, dedicated to St Saviour, the Holy Trinity, and the Blessed Virgin Mary, the site having already been occupied by the church of St Saviour. The founder was the same whom we have met with before as Sheriff of Devon and founder of Dunkeswell Abbey and patron of Polslo Nunnery. The manor of Torre belonged to him and was consequently known as Torre Bruere, though, when it passed to his daughter Alice, wife of Reginald de Mohun, it changed its name to Torre Mohun; and, being a man of influence and extensive property, he was able fittingly to endow his infant community, his grants including the churches of Torre, Wolborough, Bradworthy, and Pancraswyke, and lands at Collaton, Wolborough, Ugborough, Shillingford, Woodbury, and Bradworthy. To these were afterwards added the churches of Cockington, Townstal, Hennock, Shebbear, Sheepwash, Buckland Brewer, Putford, and Bulkworthy, and valuable possessions at Blackawton, besides lands in other places. Thus the Abbey was decidedly wealthy.

Under the rule of Abbot Geoffrey, however, the House

* *Church History*, Neander, VII, 339.

was so lavish in dispensing hospitality that its finances were heavily burdened, and therefore Bishop Quivel befriended the canons by permitting them to appropriate to their common revenue the usufruct of the prebend of Ashclist in the church of St Mary within the Castle of Exeter. This was already in their patronage, and had then fallen vacant; but it was the least lucrative of the four prebends of that church, its value being only 50s. (£50) per annum.*

The desire of John de Elmore to be transferred from Llanthony to Torre, on the ground that he preferred the stricter discipline of the latter, redounds to the credit of his adopted home, to which he was commended by Bishop Grandisson. Indeed the history of the House is particularly happy in this respect, that it reveals no abuses, and no stigma rests on the character of any of its Abbots. There was an extraordinary report, indeed, that Abbot William Norton had beheaded one of his canons; but that was proved to be utterly false, for Bishop Brantyngham was able to produce Brother Simon Hastings alive and well. Nor were there any contentions with other bodies, save a suit with Newton Abbot concerning the tenure of St Leonard's Chapel together with the adjoining site of stalls and shambles. The case was adjudicated at the Exeter Assizes, and the Judges pronounced in favour of Abbot Norton and his *confrères*.†

The one Order that was of English origin, the Gilbertines, another species of Augustinians, who took their name from their founder, Gilbert of Sempringham, never gained much favour in the land of its birth, and this part of the country knew it not.‡

The Military Religious Orders were but poorly represented in the Exeter diocese, there being but two preceptories of the Knights Hospitallers and none of the Templars. Clerkenwell, the earliest and the principal House of the Hospitallers, dated from 1100, only a few years after the institution of the Order; and, though at first poor, the English branch soon

* *Register*, 378.

† Dugdale's *Monast.*, VI, 923; *Monast. Exon.*, 169; *Trans. of Devon. Assoc.*, VI, 496.

‡ *Church in England*, Overton, I, 188.

attained to great wealth and importance, the Superior ranking as the first lay Baron in the kingdom, with a seat among the Peers. Dugdale enumerated fifty-three of their commanderies or preceptories, and acknowledged that there might have existed a few more—which was actually the case; but most of them were merely farms or granges, though the professed were bound by the Rule of St Augustine.*

The Devonshire representative was Bodmescombe Priory, which was situated on Sheldon Hill, four miles south of Uffculme. This was a member of the third class of Hospitallers' preceptories, being tenanted by sergens or half-knights, who were liable for service in either field or infirmary. It owed its foundation to Warin de Aula and Juliana his wife, who about the year 1160 granted the site to the Knights Hospitallers—for all property was held by the Order; and thereon was settled a small community, which was shown by the General Survey of 1338 to consist of three members—a prior or preceptor, a brother, and a chaplain—besides a staff of servants. They administered the various estates belonging to the Order in the county, and their known history consists chiefly of records of disputes, and even fights, about these with their neighbours of Dunkeswell Abbey. In the fifteenth century or earlier Bodmescombe was absorbed into the Priory of Buckland in Somerset, and lost its independent character, though the chapel still continued to be served by a chaplain. Finally, the property fell into the hands of the King at the Dissolution, and was granted away by him to private individuals.†

There was also a Cornish preceptory, that of Trebigh in the parish of St Ive, which originated in the middle of the twelfth century, when King Stephen or Henry II granted the manor to the Knights Hospitallers of St John of Jerusalem. Henry de Pomeroy and Reginald Marsh are mentioned as chief benefactors, and the manor and church of Temple were appended to it. Its existence continued until the time of the Dissolution of Religious Houses, and afterwards was

* Dugdale's *Monast.*, VI, 785.

† Dugdale's *Monast.*, VI, 671; *Devon Notes and Queries*, VIII, 50.

temporarily revived in the reign of Queen Mary, but now nothing remains except its name.*

If we wish to gain a conspectus of the spread of monasticism in England, we must turn to the great 1846 edition of Dugdale's *Monasticon Anglicanum*, which, though requiring some adjusting as a result of modern investigation, supplies a fairly accurate statement of the case. He aims at taking cognizance of every Religious House or Community, including not only convents of monks and friars and canons, but also collegiate churches, hospitals, and preceptories or other foundations of the Military Religious Orders. When all those in each county are grouped together, we find that naturally the huge county of Yorkshire had by far the greatest number ; and that, while monasticism was numerously represented in the eastern counties, there were comparatively few religious foundations in the west of England, and very much fewer in Wales. But Devonshire takes a very high place in the list, being surpassed only by Yorkshire, Norfolk, Lincoln, Kent, and Suffolk. Cornwall too, for its size, figured well in this respect, for there were as many as sixteen English counties, as well as all those of Wales, that had fewer of these establishments. A special feature in the Exeter diocese was the large number of collegiate churches : indeed, according to Dugdale's reckoning, only six counties had more than Cornwall, and Devonshire was excelled by Yorkshire alone. The Cistercians were more numerously represented in Devonshire than in any other county save Yorkshire and Lincoln ; the number of Cluniac Houses and of Friaries in the diocese was above the average ; and in both counties the Alien Priories were comparatively many. We draw the inference that religious fervour was of a more pronounced type in this diocese than it was, speaking generally, in the rest of the country, and that the special constitution and organization of the British Church had given a lasting impress to the mediaeval Church in Devon and Cornwall.

* Dugdale's *Monast.*, VI, 804 ; *Mag. Britannia*, III, 146, 303 ; *Hist. of Cornwall*, Hitchins, II, 340.

CHAPTER V.

THE BUILDERS OF THE NORMAN CATHEDRAL.

OF the Saxon edifice which served as the church of the Monastery of St Mary and St Peter, and which Leofric and Osbern used as their cathedral, we know scarcely anything. A rough picture of it exists, for it was engraved on the Chapter seal, and impresses are extant, attached to early twelfth century documents, but that is all the evidence that we possess. The seal gives an exterior view, taken apparently from the west, showing two terminal towers—one round and the other square—with low pointed tops, and a central spire or *flèche* and two entrance doorways—one in the middle of the façade and the other in the northern or square tower. The impression given is that of a low stone building, small and unimposing, with its towers not very much higher than the nave. That is the extent of our knowledge, and no remains of the edifice are discoverable, save some fragments of masonry that have been worked into the eastern portion of the present structure.

The half-century that followed the Norman Conquest was a period of exceptional activity in church building, and during that time almost all the cathedrals of England were reconstructed on more ambitious lines. Exeter was one of the last to undergo transformation, as it was not till 1112 that our third bishop, William of Warelwast, began the rebuilding, and it was left to Bishop Marshal to finish the undertaking in the year 1200.

The Norman Warelwast, who took his name from the village that is now called Veraval near Yvetot, between Rouen and the sea, was, according to one account, a nephew of the Conqueror, and enjoyed royal favour as a chaplain of Rufus; and both that monarch and Henry I made great use of him as an ambassador, sending him five or six times to various Popes to represent their interests, chiefly in the

great controversy concerning investiture. To Anselm he owed his consecration to the episcopate, but for a long while he supported the King in his relentless and even cruel persecution of the Primate; though afterwards, following in the wake of other bishops, he learned to appreciate the principle that inspired his line of action, and became his friend and advocate. Unlearned, but endowed with plenty of ability, bold, crafty, ready, eloquent, and vigorous—though hampered by blindness during the latter part of his episcopate—Warelwast proved his zeal and generosity for the Church not only by granting a confirmatory charter to Joel's newly founded Priory of St Mary Magdalene's at Barnstaple, but by figuring as refounder of the Priories of Launceston and Bodmin, and more by founding Plympton Priory and therein taking the vows as an Augustinian canon. There he ended his long and chequered career, and his brethren were honoured by being permitted to make his grave in their chapter-house.*

Such was the prelate to whom the diocese was indebted for its Cathedral, though long was the time that elapsed before its completion. Why the progress was so slow we cannot tell. Certainly the three months' siege of Exeter in 1136 must have hindered it for a while, though King Stephen, when at last he gained possession of the city, made compensation by assigning the sum of £7 10s. 0d. (£247) to be paid annually out of the manor of Colyton; and, again, Exeter is said to have suffered very severely by a conflagration in 1161, which may have affected the task. It had been found possible to rebuild the much larger Winchester Cathedral in fourteen years at the close of the previous century, and at the same time York Minster was the work of one Archbishop, Thomas I; and yet the erection of the comparatively small Exeter Cathedral was spread over a period of nearly ninety years. We have no record of the course of the work, and we can only suppose that there was something lacking either in keenness on the part of the successive bishops, or in generosity on the part of the churchmen of the diocese.†

* *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, LIX, 361; Oliver's *Bishops*, 14.

† *Archit. Hist. of Ex. Cath.*, 2.

Those builders of the Norman Cathedral, whose episcopates occupied the interval between Warelwast and Marshal—though indeed we do not know how many of them actually had a share in the task—are not men who figure prominently in the page of history; though it may be that the reason for this is merely the loss of the records of that period, and not any want of ability or zeal in themselves.

Robert Chichester came from the deanery of Salisbury to hold office at Exeter for seventeen years, and proved himself a benefactor of his canons by appropriating to them the benefices of Branscombe, Dawlish, St Mary Church, Sidbury, Staverton, Stoke Canon, and Teignmouth. All of these are still in their patronage, with the exception of Teignmouth (East), which is treated as a daughter-church of Dawlish. He seems to have been much absent from his diocese, as we read of his going to Rome the year after his consecration, together with Archbishop Theobald and other prelates, in order to attend the Council in that distant city, and that visit was followed by more than one other. However, he is said to have contributed generously to the building fund of the Cathedral, and to have enriched it with many relics. Curiously enough, he too, like both his immediate predecessors, was a victim to blindness—a serious hindrance to the work of the Church in the diocese, especially before the age of the employment of assistant bishops.*

Robert of Warelwast, who succeeded him here and had also been his successor in the deanery of Salisbury, was no stranger to Exeter; for not only was he a nephew of William of Warelwast, but he had been made by his uncle Archdeacon of Exeter. After an uneventful episcopate of six years his body was laid by his uncle's in Plympton Priory, to be translated in after days to the Cathedral.†

Several of Exeter's sons attained to the honour of occupying Leofric's throne, and of these the first and the greatest was Bartholomew, sometimes known as Iscanus, *i.e.*, of Isca or Exeter. While Archdeacon of his native city, he was recommended to Henry II by Archbishop Theobald and

* *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, X, 237; Oliver's *Bishops*, 17.

† Oliver's *Bishops*, 20.

Chancellor Becket as successor to Robert Warelwast, and all that we know of him encourages the belief that the choice was a good one. It is true that the extant records of his twenty-two years' episcopate are almost a blank as regards his diocese, and entirely so as regards his cathedral; for we know of nothing of importance save that he refounded St German's Priory, and bestowed on his Chapter the living of Colebrooke, of which they are still the patrons. But in the outside world, both ecclesiastical and civil, he was honoured and influential, and as a learned author—theologian, scientist, historian—and also as an eloquent speaker, he brought renown to the place of his birth. He stood high in the esteem of his sovereign, being one of two bishops appointed by him to secure the election of Becket to Canterbury, and one of five sent to Sens with Henry's appeal to Pope Alexander III in 1164. Giraldus Cambrensis declares that he and Roger of Worcester were the two leading prelates of that generation, eminent alike "ecclesiasticae zelo justitiae, religione quoque et honestate"; and Alexander called them "the two great lights of the English Church," and because he had confidence in their moral qualities as well as their capabilities, he always employed them when he wanted any commissions executed in England. Some of those commissions were important, such as the investigating of the serious charges of neglect and abuse brought against the Abbot of St Augustine's Monastery at Canterbury; but some were small, such as the judging of the latinity of the Abbot of Malmesbury, who was accused by his monks of being illiterate. In difficult times, though ready on occasion to speak severely, he proved himself a skilful diplomatist—steering a middle course in the Becket controversy, and so avoiding giving offence to either party; escaping the ban of excommunication, which fell on all the other prelates who took part in the coronation of the young Prince Henry; and cleverly satisfying the Pope with his explanation, when Bishop Foliot of London complained that Bartholomew had failed to produce the full quota due from his diocese as Peter's Pence, and that on his remonstrating with him, he had replied by taking back what he had already brought. He was honoured by being

appointed preacher at the re-opening of Canterbury Cathedral a year after Becket's death, and doubtless put much sympathy into his sermon on the text, "In the multitude of the sorrows that I had in my heart, thy comforts have refreshed my soul"; for he had received the confession of one of the murderers, William de Tracy, and ever afterwards accounted Henry II as guilty of the foul deed.

The most delightful chapter in Bartholomew's life's history is that which tells of his friendship with Baldwin. He too was an Exeter boy, and, though born of poor parents, was so happy as to gain the patronage of Bishop Bartholomew, who secured for him an excellent education in both secular and sacred learning, ordained him, and appointed him archdeacon. Baldwin, however, preferred a monastic life, and, giving up his diocesan work and dignity, took the vows in Forde Abbey, where in course of time he rose to be Abbot. There most of his literary work was done, though his pen was kept busy, too, when for a few years he ruled at Worcester as Roger's successor; and it is a pleasure to note in his writings the gratitude and affection that he always cherished for his old friend. This is manifested especially in the dedication of his considerable work "*On the Sacrament of the Altar*," in which he addressed Bartholomew as "My most dear Lord and Father," and devotedly declares, "I belong not to myself but to you, to whom, after God, I owe all my position and all my powers." Bartholomew probably knew of the high honour that was awaiting his former *protégé*, but he did not live quite long enough to see him Archbishop of Canterbury, for he expired on December 15th, 1184, Baldwin's translation taking place in the following May. Six years later the Archbishop died as a Crusader outside the walls of Tyre, and occupied a grave in foreign soil; but Bartholomew's body rests in the Lady Chapel of Exeter Cathedral under a quaintly carved effigy, which shows that he led the fashion in adopting the pointed mitre of modern shape, instead of the broad Anglo-Saxon type with two low side peaks.*

Salisbury again supplied the next bishop, for John the

* Giraldus Cambrensis, II, 346; VII, 57-61; Migne's *Patrologia*, CIC, 365-368; CCII, 641; *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, III, 330.

Chanter was subdean there; but his cognomen is due to the fact that for thirty years he had been Precentor of Exeter. Incidentally we learn that the see of Exeter was not reckoned a "plum" in ecclesiastical circles, for Godfrey de Luci refused the vacant bishopric as insufficient for his support; and his worldly wisdom justified itself, as shortly afterwards he was appointed to Winchester.* John's brief rule of five years is marked only by his appropriating to his Chapter the benefices of Ashburton and St Issey; but his resting-place in the south tower of his Cathedral was dignified by the erection of a chantry-chapel—St Michael's—which has long since disappeared, though the tomb remains.

At last we read again of the Cathedral building scheme, for Bishop Marshal, when he had accomplished half of his twelve years' episcopate, was successful in finishing the work that had been designed so long ago by Bishop William of Warelwast. The reign of Richard I was a troublous one for both Church and State, and Marshal had had his place in either sphere. A brother of William, Earl of Pembroke and Marshal of England, he was only a layman when the recently crowned King had him appointed Dean of York; and, though he was thereupon ordained subdeacon and deacon on the same day, he failed at first to obtain installation as dean, his appointment being strenuously opposed by Archbishop Geoffrey, who was but a quarrelsome worldling. Then, while bishop-elect, he joined himself to those who under the leadership of John, the future King, were conspiring against the absent monarch; though a couple of months later, when Richard had returned from his captivity in Germany, he was allowed to take part at Winchester in the second coronation. Besides his work of completing the Cathedral, his episcopate is noteworthy only for his having endowed the Vicars Choral with the advowson of Woodbury, and his Canons with that of St Perranuthno, whose proceeds were to be devoted to the repairs of the fabric; and also he ordained that every householder in the diocese should contribute annually at least a half-penny (1s. 1d.) for the benefit of the

* G. G. Perry, I, 279; Oliver's *Bishops*, 29.

mother-church.* His beautiful tomb of Purbeck marble with his effigy is placed on the north side of the present choir, and maybe it had previously occupied the post of honour on the north side of the high altar in his Norman Cathedral.†

The history of the building of the Cathedral, not being described in writing, has to be deciphered from a study of the existing fabric and from inferences drawn from analogy. We gather therefrom that the plans of the Norman architect included a choir and choir aisles of three bays with round apsidal terminations (the actual foundations of the apses were recently brought to light), a nave and aisles of seven bays, and north and south transeptal towers; and the ritual choir then extended across the opening of the transepts down into the nave, as is the case even now at Westminster and Gloucester and Rheims. Eastwards the building reached as far as the step in the middle of the present choir, where the lectern now stands, there being an empty space between that and the site of the present reredos, so that an interval of some fifty or sixty feet separated the west wall of the old Saxon Cathedral from the east end of the newer Norman one. It is possible that the first Warelwast completed his building with the exception of the north tower, which seems to be somewhat later in style, and that his work was altered by succeeding prelates down to the time of Marshal. But it seems more probable that he left the structure unfinished, and that those who carried on the work, instead of merely adopting his plans, allowed themselves to be influenced by the changing architectural style of their own time. Anyhow, the structure itself seems to tell us that to Marshal or to his immediate predecessors are to be ascribed such details as St Edmund's Chapel, the north porch, and the eastern chapels in the towers, the whole being brought to completion during that episcopate (1194–1206).‡

The most salient feature of this cathedral was undoubtedly the position of the towers, and immense credit is due to

* Grandisson's *Register*, 785.

† *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, XXXVI, 225; Oliver's *Bishops*, 29.

‡ *Archit. Hist. of Ex. Cath.*, 11; *Notes on Ex. Cath.*, 6.

Warelwast for the skilful design whereby, with excellent architectural effect, he made the bases of his towers to serve as transepts. Thereby he rendered it possible to have one long unbroken stretch of roof within—and the present one is unrivalled in England. At the same time he avoided the necessity of either narrowing the choir and nave archways, or imperilling the stability of the structure, as is so often the case where there is a central tower ; and also he imparted to the exterior that well-balanced appearance—so noticeable here—such as is secured by central towers and is destroyed by terminal ones. It may well be a matter of surprise that this admirable disposition has not been more commonly adopted. No other English Cathedral is so arranged, though on the Continent it is found at Chalons-sur-Marne and Geneva and Lyons, and it was reproduced at Ottery St Mary, when Bishop Grandisson built his church on the model of Exeter Cathedral.*

A disastrous time for the Church's work was the reign of King John, and the Exeter diocese was so much a sufferer that after the death of Bishop Marshal in the autumn of 1206 it was without a diocesan for no less than eight years. The vacancy could not be filled during the Interdict, so it was futile for the King to choose his nominee and for the Chapter to elect their candidate, and it was but an unsatisfactory arrangement that the Archbishop of Armagh should act temporarily under royal mandate. Ultimately the Chapter transferred their votes to the King's nominee, Simon of Apulia, who had figured as a supporter of absolute monarchy in its most exaggerated form ; and Archbishop Langton, champion of constitutional liberty though he was, consented to consecrate him. It was an age when the Church of England was being invaded by foreigners, and one of the earliest was this Italian Simon, who some while before had been appointed Dean of York. We know next to nothing of his Exeter doings, the one ascertained work recorded of him during his nine years' tenure of office being the delimiting of the parishes of the city of Exeter and its suburbs.†

* *Archit. Hist. of Ex. Cath.*, 2.

† Oliver's *Bishops*, 32.

It is much to be wished that we were more fully acquainted with the life and character of William Bruere (or Brewer), for the fragments of his history that have been handed down suggest that he might take rank among the ablest and greatest of the Exeter bishops. He was highly connected, being a nephew of William, Lord Brewer, who was one of the most influential laymen in the kingdom, Sheriff of Devon in the time of Richard I, and founder of Torre Abbey and of Dunkeswell Abbey and patron of Polslo Priory.* Of his twenty years' episcopate (1224–1244) the one blot—from the diocesan point of view—was his five years' absence on Crusade, he and Bishop Peter des Roches of Winchester having gone to the East about the time of the ceding of Jerusalem to the Christians in 1228.† Nor was he allowed on his return to devote himself to his ecclesiastical duties, for he was deputed by Henry III to act as escort of his sister Isabella, when she went abroad to marry the Emperor Frederick II.

Before his selection as bishop he had gained practical experience of Cathedral government and services as Precentor of Exeter, and the knowledge acquired in that office he at once utilized with great effect when he was set at the head of the administration : indeed he stands before us as the chief organizer of the Cathedral body. Till then the Bishop had been the head of the Chapter ; but he divested himself of that authority, and instead instituted the office of Dean (A.D. 1225), thus adopting the system of government that already obtained in all other English cathedrals of the old foundation. Deans of those cathedrals have never possessed the almost absolute powers enjoyed by modern deans of the new foundation ; but Dean Serlo and his successors were to wield authority somewhat greater than that of a mere *primus inter pares*, the cure of souls and the exercise of discipline being committed to them. The other dignitaries, taking precedence after the Dean in their order, were the Precentor, the Chancellor, and the Treasurer. In the next century a motto was assigned to each, which was to be affixed over his stall, that of the Dean being " Tardius atque mane residens

* *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, VI, 297.

† *Memorials of Exeter*, Izacke, 8 ; *Devon Notes and Queries*, VI, 230.

rege cuncta decane"; the Precentor's, "Hic residendo chorum rege cantor dux puerorum"; the Chancellor's, "Hac qui sede sedes jura sacrata leges"; and the Treasurer's, "Thesauros conde residens pro lumine sponde."* Either then or at a later date armorial bearings were designed for each official:—for the Dean, Azure, a stag's head caboshed and ensigned with a cross patée fitchée argent; for the Precentor, Argent, on a saltire azure a fleur de lys or; for the Chancellor, Gules, a saltire argent between four crosses crosslet or; and for the Treasurer, Gules, a saltire engrailed between four leopards' heads or.† For the support of the deans Bishop Bruere appropriated the churches of Braunton, Colaton Raleigh, and Bishop's Tawton with its chapels of Landkey and Swymbridge; and Bishop's Nympton and St Probus he assigned to the treasurership. Furthermore, he increased the endowments of the Chapter by granting to them Littleham (South), Winkleigh, St Winnow, Trevalga, and Sancreed, and assigned to the priest vicars a pension from the revenue of Altarnun. To the Religious Orders, too, he showed favour, appropriating Okehampton Church to Cowick Priory, and proving himself a generous benefactor to Torre and Dunkeswell Abbeys, to Polslo Priory, and to the Dominicans of Exeter.

Bishop Bruere left his mark on his Cathedral, and though almost all has been reconstructed since his time, the lower part of the present chapter-house, with its Early English arcading work, was his creation; and he usually has the credit of having given the quaint carvings—mostly men and beasts and birds, some of them connected with fabulous tales—which are still to be seen underneath the seats of the modern choir-stalls. Some of them maybe are to be dated a little later, but probably most of them may rightly be attributed to him. The doorway at the south-east corner of the south aisle is believed to be his also.‡

The twelve years' rule of his successor Richard Blondy

* *Ordinale Exon.*, I, 3, 4, 5.

† Oliver's *Bishops*, 269.

‡ Oliver's *Bishops*, 34; *Notes on Ex. Cath.*, 7; *Trans. of Devon. Assoc.*, XXIX, 232; XL, 193.

is almost a blank, for he himself is to us an unknown person—save that he was a native of Exeter, son of a former Mayor of the city, and that he was Chancellor of the Cathedral during nearly the whole of Bruere's episcopate—and of his doings there is nothing of any importance recorded.* But the period in which he lived was an important one, inasmuch as it marks the close of the extension of the monastic system in the diocese. The last of the monasteries was founded about that time, and the principal Mendicant Orders settled in their friaries during Blondy's episcopate. It may be appropriate, then, having already chronicled the founding of the former, to add some account of the latter, in order to complete a conspectus of the Religious Houses of the Exeter diocese.

* Oliver's *Bishops*, 37.

CHAPTER VI.

THE COMING OF THE FRIARS.

AN important city like Exeter would of course not be left without settlements of the Mendicant Orders, England having as many as ninety Franciscan Houses and forty-three Dominican; so we find that about the middle of the thirteenth century colonies of both the former (or the Lesser Brothers) and the latter (or the Preaching Brothers) established themselves in the capital of the west. The Franciscans, commonly known as Grey Friars from the colour of their habit (though we should describe it as brown), some time before 1240 obtained a site in the north-west corner of the city area, near the Snail Tower, on land belonging to St Nicholas's Priory. As the devoted friends of the poor, the members of that self-sacrificing Order were ever ready to risk their lives by dwelling in the slums; but when Edward I and his Queen spent the Christmas of 1285 in Exeter and were entertained in the palace, the Earl of Hereford was lodged in the Franciscan Convent, and through him the actual conditions were revealed. He informed the King that the place was so unhealthy that nine brethren had died in two years. His Majesty therefore requested Bishop Quivel to allow them to remove and build on a more sanatory site; Edmund, Earl of Cornwall, as Lord of the city, gave his sanction; a wider space of nearly six acres outside the south gate was occupied in 1287; and under Bishop Bytton the new friary was completed, the church being dedicated to St John the Baptist. Their memory is still preserved there in the names of Friars' Gate and Friars' Walk and Friars' Hill and Friars' Green and Friars' Terrace, all situated between Holloway Street and Colleton Crescent on the high ground overlooking the River Exe. The place of their former domicile is marked by Friernhay Street, between Fore

Street and Bartholomew Street; and there their church was still standing early in the fifteenth century, and was of sufficient importance to call forth an excommunication from Archbishop Chichele, directed against some miscreants who had profaned the building and broken its coloured windows. Shortly before the close of its history the churchyard of the second church was the scene of a strange occurrence in 1535, when at the bidding of Henry VIII Hugh Latimer, who in that year was made Bishop of Worcester, preached strongly the views of the enemies of Religious Houses. The Warden, John Cardmaker or Taylor, was a sympathizer, and later his religious opinions brought him to the stake in the time of Queen Mary.*

Though much inferior to the sister-house at Exeter, the Franciscan Convent at Bodmin would seem to have been a place of good standing, as many as ten of its members having been ordained by Bishop Stapeldon, while those of Exeter numbered twenty. That there was much intercommunication between the two is shown by the fact that three of those twenty passed on from the Devonshire Friary to the Cornish, and one followed the reverse order. Evidently the Friars of both these Orders were regarded as men of spirituality and ability as well as worthy of trust, because they were so often appointed by the bishops to act as penitentiaries. One signal instance of this was a commission by Bishop Grandisson in 1328 to Adam de Trekelade, Warden of the Bodmin Franciscans, who was authorized to hear the confessions of any persons in the diocese, and to grant absolution even in most of those cases that were usually reserved for the Diocesan. Of this House, which was founded by John Fitz-Ralph, a London merchant, and completed in 1239 by Richard, Earl of Cornwall, brother of Henry III, there are hardly any remains. It stood at the south side of the market-place, where are now the County Hall and the corn-market.†

The Franciscans were late arrivals in Plymouth, for

* *Historic Towns—Exeter*, 69, 197; Dugdale's *Monast.*, VI, 1510; *Monast. Exon.*, 330; *Devon Notes and Queries*, III, 145.

† Dugdale's *Monast.*, VI, 1510; *Monast. Exon.*, 17; Grandisson's *Register*, 420.

we read of them as "about to dwell in the town" in 1384, when Richard II sanctioned the bestowing on them of six acres of land, whereon to erect a church with a belfry and other buildings. Six years later, when they had finished their church, without obtaining episcopal sanction they secured the services of a Dominican, one John Berham, calling himself Bishop of Naples, to consecrate the place; whereupon Bishop Brantyngham took action by excommunicating both him and them, and laying the church under an interdict. There was a good deal of ecclesiastical jealousy aroused against them, and against the other Friars too, partly because of the very practical objection that they were receiving fees that might have gone to the parish priest; and as a consequence two successive vicars of Plymouth at the beginning of the fifteenth century started proceedings against them, on the ground that they had acted without licence from the Church authorities; but the attempt to oust them did not succeed. Their friary was down by the Barbican, the Plymouth Exchange in Woolster Street occupying part of the site.*

The Dominicans or Black Friars are said to have been established in Exeter by Bishop Bruere, being assigned a convenient position just to the north of the Close. They obtained in 1244 from one Peter le Wayner for twenty shillings (£22) a supply of water, and fourteen years later they permitted Bishop Bronescombe to share in the benefit. Shortly afterwards their church was consecrated by the same prelate (A.D. 1259), and it was chosen as the burial-place of many persons of distinction. One was Sir Henry Raleigh, who, dying in 1301, left instructions that his body should be buried there. But, the Dean and Chapter having the right to funeral dues of all persons dying within their jurisdiction, the corpse was first taken to the Cathedral for the usual services. This the Friars resented, and refused to receive the body, which consequently remained unburied for many days, until at last the Canons bore it back to the Cathedral and entombed it therein. The Dominicans then appealed

* *Eccles. Hist. of Old Plymouth*, I, 14, 33, 38-41; Dugdale's *Monast.*, VI, 1510; *Monast. Exon.*, 151.

to both the ecclesiastical and the civil courts; and though the case went against them, as seems only fitting, the remains were two years later translated to the Dominican Church, leaving the recumbent effigy in the south choir aisle of the Cathedral, which it still adorns. This action of the Black Friars appears ill-advised, or even childish; and in truth they need not have been so grasping, for the wills of that period show that it was customary for every testator to leave a legacy to the representatives of each of the Mendicant Orders in Exeter. Being placed within the city walls, the Dominicans probably attracted more attention than the Franciscans without, and there are several indications that the former were more favoured, *e.g.*, they had more members ordained by Bishop Stapeldon; and Bishop Grandisson, who made testamentary remembrance of most of the Religious Houses in his diocese, left to the Dominicans a hundred shillings (£83), but to the Franciscans only five marks (£55). Their importance was further recognised by their church being chosen as a place for Ordination by Bishop Thomas Chard, Suffragan of Bishop Oldham, in 1509. The Convent, too, must have ranked high in the Dominican Order, as the General Chapter of England was held there in 1441, on which occasion the preacher was Bishop Lacy, who thought fit to preserve his sermon for posterity by having it entered in full in his Register.*

Little is known of the history of the Dominicans in Truro, who took up their abode on low land near the right bank of the Kenwyn River, one of the Reskymer family being regarded as founder. All trace of their buildings has disappeared, but the junction of Frances Street and Castle Street marks the site. On his Visitation tour in 1259 Bishop Bronescombe devoted three days to Truro, consecrating Kenwyn Church and St Mary's Truro on successive days, and the Dominican Church next day (Michaelmas); and when its sanctity had been violated, Bishop Grandisson commissioned the Prior of Bodmin to reconcile it. It kept in close touch with the much more important Friary at

* Dugdale's *Monast.*, VI, 1485; *Monast. Exon.*, 334; *Historic Towns—Exeter*, 69, 198; Lacy's *Register*, 803.

Exeter, from time to time receiving inmates from there. Such is almost all its record, save for the licensing by several diocesans of various brethren to act as confessors, *e.g.*, Roger Tyrel, who was to minister to those Cornish who did not understand the English language.*

Still less is known of the Plymouth Dominicans, whose settlement near the Barbican must have been a small one. Their existence is vouched for not only by architectural remains, but by the survival of the names of Blackfriars Lane and Friars Lane close to Holy Trinity Church in Southside Street.†

The Carmelites or White Friars seem to have almost rivalled the Dominicans, though not the Franciscans, in popularity, having about forty Houses in this country. They were an Order of a high type, giving themselves up to the study of divinity, to the instructing of the young, and to the ministering of spiritual consolation and advice. Like the Dominicans, they were devoted to learning, being bent on acquiring libraries, and they produced many authors from their ranks. Plymouth was the only place that knew them in the Exeter diocese, and there they settled early in the fourteenth century, winning for themselves much popularity by their preaching, and beginning to put up conventual buildings. When the Vicar of Plymouth and the authorities of Plympton Priory sought the aid of the Bishop against this intrusion and gained his support, the Carmelites appealed to King Edward II, who was a good friend of the Order, and he interceded with Stapeldon on their behalf. As a result they were allowed to continue their work, the Diocesan granting licence to "the brethren of the Order of St Mary of Mount Carmel" to hold services and to secure any bishop that they liked to consecrate their church; but they were not to bury any strangers dying in the parish without obtaining the vicar's consent (A.D. 1314). The site that they chose was at the east end of the town, north-east of the present Friary Railway Station, their position being marked by the still existing names of Friary Street,

* Dugdale's *Monast.*, VI, 1485; Grandisson's *Register*, 394, 1146.
† *Eccles. Hist. of Old Plymouth*, I, 32; III, 90.

Whitefriars Street, and Whitecross Street. We hear but little of their doings, but proof of their continuous existence is forthcoming in many entries in the Ordination lists, and in casual references, such as a grant of five tuns of wine from Edward III when he visited Plymouth, a legacy of a vestment and forty shillings (£33) from Bishop Grandisson, and the excommunication of Prior Henry Sutton by Bishop Brantyngham for a breach of regulations.*

The Townstal or Dartmouth property was one of the least valuable estates of the Abbot and Canons of Torre, but it figures a good deal in the Abbey records, chiefly because of an extraordinary case that came before the ecclesiastical courts. Certain brethren of the Order of the Hermits of St Augustine settled there and began to build for themselves a chapel. They had no right to be there at all, for the place belonged to Torre Abbey, so the Bishop issued his inhibition and ordered the demolition of their chapel; and when they carried an appeal to Rome, the case was given against them. The chapel however remained—apparently they finished building it—and then (in 1345) there arrived one day a man in civilian dress, wearing a sword, who gave out that he had been sent by the King to transact his business concerning shipping. But he went to the Hermits' abode, donned a habit, and, announcing that he was the Archbishop of Damascus, assumed a mitre and pastoral staff, and performed various episcopal functions. At the instance of the Bishop he had afterwards to answer for his actions before a court at Lambeth, when he confessed that he had consecrated the Hermits' cemetery at Dartmouth, and had ministered Confirmation, and had granted indulgences. He was also charged with declaring that he had been sent by the Pope and all his Cardinals to consecrate the chapel, and with displaying a ring on his finger, which, he said, had been placed there by his Holiness himself; and further, that, when the people of Dartmouth said uncomfortable things about his being an intruder, he replied that he cared naught for the

* Stapeldon's *Register*, 315; Grandisson's *Register*, 763; Dugdale's *Monast.*, VI, 1570; *Monast. Exon.*, 152; *Eccles. Hist. of Old Plymouth*, I, 27; III, 88.

Bishop of Exeter. As he acknowledged himself guilty on some of these counts, he was loosed from the ban of the greater excommunication from which he was suffering, and was bound over to appear before the Archbishop of Canterbury in order to receive sentence. That sentence would doubtless have been severe, if, as might appear from this narrative, he was not a bishop at all, but merely "Brother Hugh." From other sources, however, we learn that Hugh, Archbishop of Damascus, was at that time acting as Suffragan of York, and owned a park at Newstead. The Hermits continued to live on at Dartmouth, but seem to have been much discredited; for, six years later, when Bishop Grandisson had to stop their presumption in acting as confessors, he describes them as "disciples of Antichrist, who pretend that they are habited Religious, and make out that they are brethren of the Order of Hermits." This was emphasized next year by the licensing of two other members of that Order to celebrate and hear confessions anywhere in the diocese, with the pointed exception of Dartmouth.*

A scheme was launched for the establishing of a branch of the same Order at Barnstaple, where a local magnate, Sir James de Audeley, with episcopal approval in 1348 granted land for the brethren of the Order of the Hermits of St Augustine. Apparently the Black Death hindered his beneficent purpose, but five years later Robert Rowe gave five acres for the erection of a church and friary buildings. There is no proof that the House was actually founded, and, if founded, it never figured in the history of the diocese.†

The most obscure body of the Regulars in Exeter was the Crossed Friars, sometimes known as the Crutched Friars—an offshoot of the Trinitarian Order, whose function it was to endeavour to obtain the release of Christians taken captive by Moslems. There were Houses of Crossed Friars in London and Oxford, but they never gained much footing in England. The Exeter settlement is just mentioned a couple of times

* Grandisson's *Register*, 1027, 1028, 1108, 1123; *Reg. Sacrum Angl.*, 143.

† Grandisson's *Register*, 236, 1047; Dugdale's *Monast.*, VI, 1591; *Notitia Monastica*, Devonshire, III, 3; *Ch. of St Peter, Barnstaple*, 131.

early in the sixteenth century—they were ruled by a prior, and had St John as their patron saint ; but they have no place in the records of the Dissolution of Religious Houses, probably as not being owners of land.*

As a consequence of the Mendicant Orders being exempted by papal privilege from episcopal authority, they are noticed but little in the chronicles of our diocese. There is mention, however, of a kindly act of Roger de Thoriz, Archdeacon of Exeter, who in 1266 allowed the brethren of the city friaries the permanent use of his little library of fourteen volumes of theology. More important were the liberties conferred on them in the matter of hearing confessions. First was the endorsing by Bishop Quivel in 1281 of a rescript of Archbishop Peccham, giving the Franciscans authority to preach and absolve, without any need to ask leave of the parish priest. The customary peregrinations of members of both the great Orders for the hearing of confessions were fully recognised by the Synod of Exeter in 1287, and their lives and work were spoken of in the highest terms of commendation ; but though Peccham's rescript was based on a grant from the Pope, the Synod ruled that confessors must first obtain the incumbent's permission, and that the usual dues must be paid to the parish church. When the Mendicants became unpopular owing to the waning of their self-sacrifice and spirituality, the licences to act as penitentiaries were either withheld altogether or issued very sparingly. They seem to have maintained their numbers, but their power and influence decreased, though doubtless their churches continued to be largely attended by the faithful.

* *Devon Notes and Queries*, IV, 151 ; VI, 90, 107.

CHAPTER VII.

THE ARCHITECTS OF THE PRESENT CATHEDRAL.

THE episcopate of Bronescombe introduces a new era, inasmuch as he is the first Bishop of Exeter of whom sufficient is known to enable us to attempt a history of him and his diocese; for with him commences the series of the *Exeter Episcopal Registers*, which give a detailed record of all ecclesiastical doings. In this respect the Exeter diocese is particularly fortunate, for with the exception of Lincoln and York, whose Registers begin in 1209 and 1215 respectively, these are the earliest possessed by the English Church; and they are also among the most complete, the only serious gaps being the episcopate of Bytton (1291–1307) and the Commonwealth period (1646–1660), the latter of which is vacant in every diocese. As regards local enterprise, too, Exeter is exceptionally happy, for the late Prebendary F. C. Hingeston-Randolph edited the Registers of Bishops Bronescombe, Quivel, Bytton (fragments), Stapeldon, Berkeley, Grandisson, Brantyngham, and Stafford, and a portion of Lacy's; and the late Dr C. Gordon Browne and the Reverend O. J. Reichel continued his good work by issuing a second portion of Bishop Lacy's. They thus cover the period 1258–1441—almost the fullest achievement as regards registers of all the dioceses of England and Wales.*

Bronescombe's Register, indeed, was temporarily lost about half a century after his decease, and it was only by the favour of good fortune that it has been preserved. Bishop Stapeldon had it with him in his London house, which was looted by the mob at the time of his murder, and then the book disappeared. The precious folio was afterwards purchased by some unknown person, who either in ignorance

* *Episcopal Registers*, Fowler.

or in malice defaced many passages, so that Bishop Grandisson, who seems to have been instrumental in recovering it, wrote a note to that effect at the commencement of the volume :— "Sciendum quod cancellaciones hic facte, vel per nigrum tracte, ab aliquo ignorante, vel non pertinente, fiebant, qui Registrum, post necem secundi Walteri, emit et retinuit multum diu." *

Of unknown origin, but claimed by Exeter as her son, though some think Branscombe to have been his birthplace, Walter Bronescombe was a man of position and of note at the time of his election, having been for a number of years Archdeacon of Surrey and a chaplain of the Pope; nor was he unhonoured in his future diocese, for he was also Chancellor of Exeter Cathedral. His elevation was accomplished with extraordinary rapidity. True, his name had been before the Chapter six or seven weeks before their actual decision, but the various processes of election, royal assent, archbishop's confirmation, restoration of the temporalities, ordination to the priesthood, and consecration were all performed in the brief compass of fifteen days. As was then not unusual with archdeacons, he was still only in deacon's Orders; but together with the Bishops-elect of Norwich and Coventry he was ordained to the priesthood at Canterbury by Archbishop Boniface of Savoy, and the next day the three were raised to the episcopate, his enthronization at Exeter taking place only four days later (April 14th, 1258).

As Bishop of Exeter he inherited from his predecessor, in addition to the palace at Exeter and a London house, as many as sixteen manors. Seven of these were in Devon—Clyst (Sowton), Crediton, Chudleigh, Bishop's Teignton, Paignton, Bishop's Nympton, and Bishop's Tawton. He had six manors in Cornwall—Pawton in St Breocke, Lawhitton, St German's, Cargoll in St Newlyn, Penryn, and Tregeare in St Gerrans, to which he himself afterwards added Egloshayle. The three others were far away—Horsley in Surrey, Faringdon in Hampshire, and Chidham in Sussex, all of which, together with the Chapel of Bosham, had been granted to

* *Register*, vii.

Bishop Bruere by Henry III in 1243.* Some of these were very convenient for his use—at Clyst (which, next to Exeter, was his usual place of residence) he was within four miles of his Cathedral, and Horsley was only a twenty-five miles' ride from London. Chudleigh was a favourite abode, and he was frequently at Crediton and Paignton. But the care of so many properties must have been burdensome, and it is evident, from the number of visits that he paid, that they made great demands on his time and attention.

From Bishop Blondy, however, he inherited also heavy liabilities, which saddled him with debts, so that he had to resort frequently to money-lenders, especially to meet the expenses incurred by his foreign travels. Thus, when in Paris within six months of his consecration, having already obtained large loans in England, he borrowed further sums amounting to 230 marks (£3,318 in modern value); and only two years before his death he declares himself bound to Florentine merchants for accommodating him with 100 marks (£1,361).

Another trouble that came to him from his predecessor was a scandalous case of a series of forgeries, involving several clergymen of high position, including even Walter de Lodeswell, Chancellor of the Diocese and Bishop's Chamberlain. These, to the number of eleven, had met in the Palace at Exeter when the late Bishop was on his death-bed, and had conspired together to write letters and append the episcopal seal, disposing of his goods and conferring benefices on whomsoever they pleased. The new Bishop let a year elapse, and then in Buckfast Abbey met the two ringleaders, who made full confession, even admitting that many of the letters had been written after they knew that their Lord was dead, and divulging the names of their accomplices. On their humble petition they, soon afterwards, were granted absolution.

The records of the Episcopal Register enable us to see that the Church's system of work and discipline was in full operation in the diocese, as administered by Bishop Bronescombe. Thus we find mention made of formal Visitations,

* *Register*, 33.

both of the Diocesan and of the Metropolitan. The Archbishop came in the summer of 1261, and on one day (this is the whole of the brief entry) "Bonifacius, Cantuariensis Archiepiscopus, visitavit Walterum, Exoniensem Episcopum," devoting the next day to the Dean and Chapter. Other corporations were visited by deputies ("per clericos suos"), who were accompanied by a representative of the Bishop, William de Capella, *viz.*, the Religious of Totnes Priory, Plympton Priory, Tavistock Abbey, Launceston Priory, Bodmin Priory, Tywardreath Priory, and Hartland Abbey, one day being allotted to each. Another Archiepiscopal Visitation was expected in 1277, when his Lordship wrote to the Dean and to his Official Principal, instructing them to urge the archdeacons to exercise all discipline, so that the diocese might be found in good order; but the anticipated event does not seem to have taken place.*

Of Episcopal Visitations eleven are recorded—two to the Dean and Chapter, and one held in Bridestowe Church, the others being paid to Religious Houses—the Priories of St Nicholas at Exeter, Polslo, Pilton, Plympton, Launceston, St German's, Bodmin, and Tywardreath. It is remarkable that none of these Visitations, except those to his Dean and Chapter, occurs after he had held office for five years.

It is matter of considerable interest to trace his less formal visits to places in his diocese. As an introduction to this phase of his work we quote Prebendary Hingeston-Randolph's graphic account of a Visitation tour that he made through a considerable part of the diocese a year and a half after he had become Bishop—the first attempt to come into touch with his people in their parishes. His peregrination was indeed a fine display of energy and endurance, and in order to help the reader to appreciate it correctly, we add in brackets the mileage, and would have him bear in mind that travelling in those parts would be done on horseback, and that good roads probably did not then exist. "Leaving Lawhitton by Tamar-side on the 18th or 19th (September, 1258), he reached Bodmin (24 miles) on the 20th, and on the same day journeyed to Poltone (8), where he remained till the 26th, when we find

* *Register*, 41, 42.

him at St Newlyn, some miles (15) to the south-west, and the following day at Kenwyn (8). The 28th and 29th were spent in Truro (1); and thence he made his way to Tregony (7), which he reached on the 30th. There he abode two days, setting out on the 3rd of October for the south coast, and visiting in rapid succession a large number of places, some of which are not altogether easy of access even now, and must have been much less so over such roads as the good Bishop and his retinue had to encounter more than six hundred years ago. He visited St Anthony-in-Roseland (11) on the 3rd, St Michael Caerhays (11) and Tregeare (his Manor in St Gerrans) on the 5th, Mevagissey (5) and Bodrigan (in St Goran) on the 8th, St Austell (6) on the 9th, and Looe, many miles (17) over the hills eastward, on the 11th. That night he reached St German's Priory (8) and spent the next day there, proceeding to Shevioke (2) on the 13th, Antony (2) on the 14th, the remote parish of Rame (5) on the 15th, Pillaton (14) miles away to the north, and by a very circuitous route, on the 16th, St Mellion (2) on the 17th, Botus Fleming (3) on the 18th, St Dominic (5) on the 20th, North Petherwyn (18) far away in North Cornwall beyond Launceston on the 22nd, St Clether (7) on the 23rd, Kelly (15) across the Tamar on the 24th, and St Stephen's-by-Launceston (7) on the 25th. It will be well worth anyone's while to follow the indefatigable Bishop's route on the map. Its recital might well be regarded as almost incredible, but for the fact that his Register records the work done at every place, and thereby increases our wonder. For in the course of some thirty days he dedicated no fewer than thirty-one churches, in addition to attending to much diocesan work of other kinds. Weary and worn, we may well believe, he retired to his quiet home at Chudleigh for a week's rest, having crossed the great moor. And even here work awaited him, for on November 6th he dedicated the Parish Church; and on the 8th he set out again, visiting sixteen widely scattered parishes within a month, and dedicating no less than thirteen churches."*

We cannot feel quite satisfied, however, that the Bishop was normally a diligent visitor of his diocese. The number

* *Register*, xi.

of parishes was 564 (we have a full list in the Taxation of Pope Nicholas IV, about ten years after Bronescombe's death), and of these his Register records official visits to only 90 (counting Exeter as one parish). There were, besides, 32 Religious Houses, and there is mention of visits to only 16 of them. The total number of recorded visits paid to his parishes (excluding Exeter) was 306 (of which however 194 were visits to his manors or to parishes in which his manors were situated), and the number of those to his Religious Houses was 32; so that during the twenty-two years of his episcopate such visits (including those to his manors) were less than an average of 16 per annum. It appears, then, that five-sixths of the parishes of the diocese were unvisited by the Diocesan during the whole of his time; and that he never set foot in some large areas, such as the region west of the Dart that lies south of a straight line drawn from Totnes to Plymouth, and all that part of Cornwall that stretches from Truro and Falmouth to Land's End, and (with the single exception of Whitstone) the long extent of the north coast of Cornwall that reaches from Wadebridge to Hartland.

It would seem, then, that to the great majority of the people of Devon and Cornwall their Bishop was a distant magnate, unknown and unseen, and that such would be the case not only with the laity, but also, though to a less degree, with the clergy. For the latter the Diocesan's place would in some ways be filled by the archdeacons and the rural deans, who would be helpful in administering discipline and giving counsel and inspiring the workers by their encouragement; but we wonder what was done with regard to Confirmations, about which no mention is made in the Episcopal Register. It would be a thirty miles' journey from the west end of Cornwall to Penryn—the nearest place that the Bishop ever reached; and twenty from the southernmost point of Devon to Totnes or Plympton, and it was but seldom that his Lordship was to be found even there. As far as we can gather, Bronescombe's character was free from all reproach, he was very highly esteemed by the chief men in both Church and State, and doubtless he was an

exemplary bishop according to the standard of that age; but, even when all allowance is made for the difficulties of communication, we cannot feel convinced that the working of the Church's system reached a very high level in this respect.

Of course, however, the entries in the Episcopal Register may be incomplete, and only on this supposition can we account for the note that in the year 1268–1269 the Bishop dedicated forty churches in Devon and Cornwall.* It is possible too that many parishes were honoured by the presence of their diocesan, but that the fact was not officially registered, because no formal or important office was performed there. And again, when mention is made of a visit to some one distant place, such as Combe Martin in 1260 or Pawton in St Breocke in 1266 or Tavistock in 1278, it is manifest that he must have passed through a considerable number of parishes on the way; so that his knowledge of his diocese and his people's acquaintance with him would alike be more extensive and more intimate than might be inferred from a perusal of his *Register*. Therefore, while we cannot maintain that Bronescombe at all approximated to our idea of a visiting Bishop, yet a *caveat* must be entered against any condemnation of him on the mere evidence afforded by his official record.

It was certainly a misfortune that the Bishop absented himself so much from his diocese—his Register proves that he was away for at least 3,301 days, and it is certain that even that is not the full number. This means that of his twenty-two years' episcopate, an aggregate of considerably over nine years was spent elsewhere—an average of 150 days per annum. London was the place most often visited—he was there 52 times—and probably his town house was much of a home to him. He had his own chapel there, where he occasionally held an Ordination; and there he would be at hand, whenever Parliament met at Westminster, or for Convocation—such as that of 1278 when all bishops were summoned, including "coadjutor and suffragan bishops, together with some chief men from their Chapters and the archdeacons and the proctors of the whole clergy." Thrice he travelled abroad, spending a whole month in Paris in

* *Register*, 68.

the very first year of his episcopate, though he devoted only six weeks of that year to his diocese. The second trip was taken in company with many great ecclesiastics and laymen, deputed to meet in Burgundy the new King, Edward I, who was away on Crusade when his father died. This was not a long visit, for he returned to his base in Canterbury after an absence of about three months. But almost at once he started again for foreign lands, and remained away for nearly a year, staying a while at Paris and then at Bayonne. While he was at the latter place, Queen Eleanor there gave birth to a son, and Bishop Bronescombe was honoured by being asked to baptize the little Prince Alphonso. Thence he went on to Bordeaux and Vitry and Paris, and was one of the five hundred bishops who attended at Lyons the Fourteenth General Council in the summer of 1274, soon after which he made his way back to England, and to the diocese of Exeter, from which he had been an absentee for more than sixteen months.

Once, and once only, did our Bishop make provision for the performance of his episcopal duties by deputy. During the first three months of the year 1275, whilst he was away in London, his place was occupied by an Irishman, Thomas, Bishop of Leighlin, who as Suffragan was to hold Ordinations "during our absence, and to perform such other functions as are restricted to the episcopal office."*

Very remarkable is the list of churches consecrated by the Bishop. During his first year he spent but little time in his diocese, and no consecrations are recorded. But in 1259 he consecrated thirty-one parish churches, including such important places as Ottery St Mary, Truro, Kenwyn, St Austell, Looe, and St Stephen's-by-Launceston, and also the conventual churches of Totnes Priory and of the Dominicans at Exeter and Truro. Two years later another round of visits took in St German's Priory Church, and fourteen parish churches, *e.g.*, Chagford, Okehampton, and Lydford. After that the recorder is silent, except for the brief note that in the year 1268-9 he dedicated forty churches in Devon and Cornwall. If those are all, it is still a very considerable

* *Register*, 202.

number, and the fact that so many were ready for consecration at the Bishop's first coming might be thought to show that there had been marvellous and abnormal activity in church building or restoration, such as has had no parallel in modern times. But the more probable explanation is that, either because the whole of the requisite furniture had not been provided, or because people had not taken the trouble to make the necessary arrangements, rebuilt churches had for years been left unconsecrated, though regularly used for public worship, as indeed was only too often the case at that period. Still, the fact that eighty-five parish churches were consecrated in the brief spell of eleven years is proof that there was much religious life in the diocese in the middle of the thirteenth century.*

It is remarkable how scrupulous Bronescombe was in observing the canonical times for Ordinations, almost always fixing them for the Ember Seasons (though three times on Easter Eve); and remarkable too that he regularly held them on a Saturday, the sole exceptions being that in 1261 at Exeter he ordained eight acolytes on Easter Sunday, and his last Ordination came on a Sunday—April 7th, 1280. We know that he performed this function thirty-seven times, and it may be that he did so more frequently, as none are recorded in his *Register* for the years 1277–1279. He seems to have studied the convenience of the candidates in arranging the place, choosing such various centres as Exeter, Tiverton, Crediton, Torrington, Plympton, Totnes, Paignton, Bishop's Teignton, Branscombe, and Honiton in Devonshire, and in Cornwall—St German's, Bodmin, Penryn, Pawton (St Breocke) Launceston, and Whitstone. Several Ordinations he held outside his diocese—four times in London, thrice at Horsley, and once each at Faringdon, Titchfield (Hants), and Waverley Abbey. It is surprising to find how small were the numbers of those ordained. True, it is only on fifteen occasions that the figures are given, but the total of those amounts only to forty-two—three priests, four deacons, twenty-six subdeacons, and nine acolytes. It looks as if the diocese was inadequately staffed.

* *Register*, 65.

One of the abuses of the age was that persons who were not in Holy Orders were able to hold benefices, and it is evident that this was impressed upon Bronescombe; for only six days after his enthronization he made an effort to abate the evil, writing to his four archdeacons (Exeter, Cornwall, Totnes, and Barnstaple) and charging them to order ("quod citent peremptorie") all rectors and vicars who were not priests to present themselves on the Vigil of Trinity Sunday in Exeter Cathedral, "Sacros Ordines, prout animarum cura requirit, recepturi." The abuse, however, continued, and the Bishop found himself bound to acquiesce; for (so we must infer) he could not secure enough men in Holy Orders to fill the vacant livings, so that on divers occasions he had to consent to ordain someone as subdeacon and at the same time license him to a benefice.

So wide-spread was this irregularity that the General Council of Lyons attempted to cope with it by legislation, and Bronescombe returned to England with his reforming zeal quickened. He wrote at once to his Official Principal to announce that he would hold an Ordination in Tiverton Church on September 22nd, 1274; and he commanded that strict injunctions should be issued to all beneficed clergy in Devon who were below the Order of priests, that, having made their confessions, they should present themselves at the appointed date and place to be duly admitted to the Order that the cure of souls requires.*

But the disease was too malignant to be thus cured. A year later the Bishop wrote in similar strain to his Official Principal, citing the recent statute of the Council of Lyons and the Sacred Canons that enacted that beneficed clergymen, especially those with cure of souls, must be in priests' Orders; and directing that, as these rules of the Church had been so little regarded in the diocese, all of inferior Orders were to attend in Torrington Church to be raised to the priesthood. And once more, in the following year an Ordination was arranged for the Priory Church at Launceston, recalcitrants being even threatened with deprivation; and on this occasion the precaution was taken of summoning the quasi-candidates

* *Register*, 212.

to appear two days previously in Launceston Parish Church in order to show their titles and to be examined.*

Still the effort failed to correct the evil, and only two years before his death the disappointed Diocesan had to complain sadly of the continuance of this abuse, and called upon his archdeacons to make inquisition for its amendment; as also to take note of other clerical short-comings, such as non-residence, neglect of duty, worldliness, and the squandering of the Church's money on luxuries and the ministering to carnal lusts. His laudable endeavour met with sore discouragement in an unexpected manner, for when a year later Bronescombe refused to institute Clement de Liskeard, who was only a subdeacon, to the rectory of Roche, the rejected candidate appealed to Canterbury, and the Bishop had to give way.†

The average standard of clerical life in that thirteenth century was but low. Not only was it the case that many of base origin sought admittance to Orders, for whom it was customary to issue a dispensation "super defectu natalium"; but many were illiterate, and, when ordained, caused grief and scandal by their behaviour and conduct. All this is apparent in an incident in 1273, when our Bishop had a passage of arms with Pope Gregory X concerning two men of his diocese, who brought papal letters demanding that they should be advanced from Minor to Holy Orders. Bronescombe refused on account of their ignoble birth and because they were "insufficienter litterati"; and while he left their case to be dealt with as his Holiness might see fit, he made the sad admission that "in these days scarcely any men take Orders with the object of devoting themselves to serve as ministers of God, but rather they wickedly spend their life in worldly pursuits, whereby scandal is caused among the people."‡

Another unsatisfactory feature of Church economy was the commonness of excommunication. Again and again we meet with cases in which some clergyman, not for any

* *Register*, 212, 213.
† *Register*, 18, 234.
‡ *Register*, 15.

specified grave crime but for indefinite and maybe trivial matters, was put under the ban of the Church—" pro variis contumaciis et offensis excommunicatus " is a usual expression ; and the sentence was freely pronounced against laymen merely for personal insults or injuries against the Bishop.

Instances of this are provided by the history of a long-drawn contention between the Bishop and Edmund, Earl of Cornwall, who was a nephew of Henry III. Some followers of the Earl, apparently with at least the collusion of their Lord, invaded the park of the Bishop's manor of Cargaul or Gargaul (now Cargoll) in the parish of St Newlyn—a manor granted in 1269 by the Prior and monks of Bodmin " Venerabili Fratri nostro, Domino Waltero." Led by John Beaupré, they cut down his timber, injured his crops and cattle, and incarcerated Prebendary John de Esse, his Official Principal. In the following year (1273) the Earl's men, armed with swords, broke into the church of the adjoining parish of St Allen, wounded and beat some priests and others who had been sent by the Bishop, and killed or maimed their horses. The offenders came under the curse of the greater excommunication, and were publicly denounced, " accensis candelis et pulsatis campanis," in Exeter Cathedral and in every collegiate and parish church in the diocese. The case was referred to the Archbishop, and two or three years elapsed before it was settled ; but ultimately it was decided that the Earl should make good all damages, especially in the park at Cargaul ; John Beaupré put his hand to a fully detailed confession and agreed to pay 400 marks (£5,500) as compensation, and several military men acted in like manner ; and then the Official Principal of Cornwall was instructed to declare formally the reversal of the excommunication of all concerned.*

Somewhat similar, but more trivial, was the dissension between his Lordship and Lord Henry de Pomeroy of Berry by Totnes, who with many of his retinue trespassed in the Bishop's park at Paignton, and drove off and slew some of his beasts. Excommunication followed, but on his sub-

* *Register*, 43-46, 54-58, 239-242.

mission and promise of good conduct the aggressor was pardoned.*

Other instances of excommunication were connected with more definitely ecclesiastical offences, such as when the inhabitants of Okehampton were banned and their church laid under an interdict, because they had alienated mortuaries to their own use; as a consequence of which, five of them appeared before the Bishop at Kingswear, and on their submission to him were absolved, but had to pay a hundred shillings (£105) as damages.† Again, at Ottery St Mary "certain satellites of Satan" were charged with employing armed force and robbing the Church of its dues and offerings; so the Archdeacon of Exeter was instructed to assemble all the priests of the deanery of Aylesbeare and others near at hand, and to send them, "clad in their vestments and marching in procession," to Ottery Church, that they might warn the malefactors to desist under pain of incurring the greater excommunication. At Mylor, too, seven men were banned for the seemingly trivial crime of removing soil from the church. Surely the frequency with which this punishment was inflicted must have robbed it of half its terror, and greatly diminished its efficacy as a deterrent.

More serious were troubles that arose with some of the chief Religious Houses in the diocese. There was a lengthy dispute with Plympton Priory in 1263 concerning rights of patronage and appointment, and the Bishop freely issued writs of excommunication, suspension, and interdict; with the result that the brethren surrendered and were absolved, his Lordship being hospitably entertained in the Priory and receiving a mulct of 100 marks (£1,419) for "expensis et dampnis," half of which however he graciously remitted.‡

At Launceston Priory there was need of discipline, the aged Prior, Robert de Fissacre, being excommunicated "propter inobedientiam et manifestam offensam," which charge was afterwards more specifically defined as "incuria et negligencia." The sentence was published in the Chapter-

* *Register*, 229.
† *Register*, 211.
‡ *Register*, 225-228.

house at Launceston by the Priors of Bodmin and Tywardreath, and the Prior penitently presented himself before the Bishop at Tregony and was pardoned. Two years later (1261) the Diocesan accepted his resignation, and in recognition of his age and services allowed him a room and garden with board and pension in the Priory for the rest of his days. Bronescombe was wont to use vigorous and graphic language in his official documents, and one of the most beautifully expressed is his grant to this old ecclesiastic, whom he had perhaps treated with unnecessary severity :—"Inasmuch as you have now passed the dawn and midday of your life, and have borne the heavy burdens of the aforesaid Church at Launceston, whose government you have resigned of your own free will, we judge it to be only fitting that we should recognise your merits by conferring on you special honour, now that in the course of nature you are approaching your eventide."

Before leaving the subject of excommunications, it is well to mention that in those times there were a great many offences which were permanently banned by the Church, so that the perpetrators were *ipso facto* excommunicate without any formal proceedings being taken *ad hoc*. This was highly inconvenient, for men might find that they had unwittingly incurred this extreme censure, or they might be ignorant as to what crimes were thus damnatory. To obviate this very unsatisfactory state of affairs our Bishop with much wisdom sent to the Archdeacon of Exeter (and doubtless to the other Archdeacons too) a formal rescript, in which he defined those *ipso facto* causes of excommunication, the chief ones being the disturbing of the peace of the King or his realm ; the curtailing of public liberties and privileges, whether customary or specially granted by authority ; the tampering with the laws of marriage or inheritance ; the hindering of rights of sanctuary ; the causing of trouble to the Church or interfering with her liberties ; and the using of violence against clerics or the Bishop's officials, or churches or property belonging to ecclesiastical persons. This document, which was to be published in every church and affixed in some prominent place, was issued in the early

part of 1277; and it seems to reflect some of the troubles that had been experienced by the Bishop, especially in its mention of manors and parks under the last heading.

Of Bronescombe's special works in his diocese honourable mention must be made of the revision of the Statutes of his Cathedral, which he accomplished in 1268 with the co-operation of the Dean and Chapter, though some matters were left over for treatment at a future time. He had to complain, however, that these regulations were not well observed; and in 1275, when he was contemplating a Visitation of the city and the diocese, he sent orders that once every Saturday, after the *Martyrologium*, the Statutes should be read in the Chapter-house as a preparation for his coming; lest, when he visits, "super inobediencia, contemptu, et perjurio—quod absit—ipsos arguere debeamus." He bestowed much care on the work of revision, which was completed in 1277, and succeeding generations regarded this as one of his greatest achievements, as is evident from its being included in the epitaph over his tomb :—*

> Edidit hic plura dignissima laude Statuta,
> Que, tanquam jura, servant hic omnia tuta.

Another undertaking, which shares with the last the honour of being thus commemorated, was the foundation in 1267 of the College of St Mary and St Thomas (commonly known by the latter name) at Glasney near Penryn in Cornwall.

> Ad hoc, Collegium quod Glasneye plebs vocat omnis
> Condidit egregium, pro voce data sibi somnis.

The "voice that spoke to him in his sleep" is a reference to the story that on his return from Germany, where he had been on the King's business, he was taken very ill and lay in Canterbury at death's door; but thrice St Thomas, the martyred Archbishop, appeared to him in vision and foretold his recovery. He was instructed further that it was God's will that, when he went back to his diocese, he should found in the woods of Glasney on his manor of Penryn, to the glory of God and in honour of St Thomas the Martyr, a college with secular canons and vicars and other ministers. "This

* *Register*, xiii, 76-77.

shall be to thee a sign. When thou comest to the place Glasney, thou shalt search for a certain spot in it near the river Antre, called by the inhabitants Polsethow, which Cornish name being interpreted is 'mire or a pit.' . . . . . And thou shalt find in it a large willow-tree, and therein a swarm of bees; and there thou shalt appoint a high altar and ordain the fabric." Bronescombe followed all the directions, and found everything as indicated, including the willow-tree, "the trunk of which" (so the author of the *Cartulary*, writing in the fifteenth century, informs us) "is yet preserved for a memorial in the church." He laid the foundation on the day after the Annunciation in 1265, finished the work in two years, and on the Sunday after that festival consecrated the church and its cemetery. It was a pity however that the vision had not pointed out a more desirable site—St Thomas could hardly be expected to have studied hygiene and geology—for the spot was low and unhealthy and the soil poor, so that frequent restorations were found to be needed.*

The Bishop seems to have cherished affectionate regard for this his creation, and his *Register* contains entries of five visits to Glasney, besides five others to Penryn. The corporation consisted of thirteen secular canons, one of whom was to be Prefect (procurator or prepositus), and each was to receive six marks (£87) annually from the appropriated churches of Penryn and St Budock and St Feock. They were to follow the customs of Exeter Cathedral, but each might appoint a vicar to sing for him at a stipend of twenty shillings (£22) a year. The Bishop was to appoint the canons and also the vicars of those three churches, and he afterwards endowed it further with the churches of St Sithney, St Zennor, St Goran, St Enoder, St Kea, and St Colan. It was arranged that each new canon was to have eight shillings (£9) a year, and was to keep the obit of his predecessor, every other canon present at the service receiving two pence (3s. 6d.), and every vicar one penny, if a priest, and, if not, a half-penny. Later he appropriated also the church of Manaccan, which was to support two chaplains in St Thomas's, who were to say

* *Hist. of Glasney*, 4, 5; *Glasney Cartulary*, 6, 7.

Mass daily, the one of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the other for the departed.*

Another religious foundation in which he showed a beneficent interest was Crediton Collegiate Church. To its six canons he appropriated the rectory of Egloshayle, which he afterwards exchanged for Lelant, and he granted the church of Coleridge for the support of the six vicars. To Newenham Abbey, too, he proved himself a benefactor, contributing six hundred marks (£8,381) for the rebuilding of the church, with provision for six altars ; and the Franciscans of Bodmin had reason to regard him with special gratitude for his generosity to them.†

An example of the solicitude that he showed to arrange fairly and satisfactorily the details of diocesan organization is supplied by the case of some parishioners of the great parish of Lydford, which until recently included almost the whole of Dartmoor, with an area of 56,000 acres. These people complained that the journey to their parish church was eight miles in fair weather and fifteen in foul, so that they could seldom attend, whereas Wydecombe Church was within reasonable distance. The Bishop ruled that they were still to continue parishioners of Lydford, but were to look to Wydecombe for all spiritual ministrations, and were to contribute to the expenses of that church, co-operating with the parishioners in keeping the fabric in repair and enclosing the churchyard, and in providing lights and holy bread.‡

One more branch of episcopal work is worth noting—the issuing of briefs. These seem to have been fairly numerous (sixteen were granted 1259–1261), and usually gave permission to persons or associations to collect money in the diocese during one year for various religious or philanthropic institutions. By this means help was solicited for such objects as the support of the Hospital of St Lazarus at Jerusalem, the Church of St Mary at Bethlehem, the Hospital of St Thomas at Acre, St David's Cathedral, and Worcester

* *Register*, 94-97, 244.
† *Register*, xvi, 59-62, 72.
‡ *Register*, 204.

Cathedral (to last for three years); and a brief was granted "pro Ecclesia Exoniensi, sine temporis perfinicione" (August 31st, 1259).*

The public estimate of the character and the ability of Bishop Bronescombe was manifested by the statement of William of Worcester that he was commonly known as "Walter the Good."† Evidence of the same feeling is to be found in the fact that his name stands first of the twelve bishops and barons who were appointed to settle affairs after the civil war that culminated in the Battle of Evesham, their agreement, known as the "Dictum of Kenilworth," being accepted by the royalist and the baronial parties (October, 1266).‡ And a late instance of a manumission—one Peter Dureman of Plympton "cum tota sequela sua et catallis"—is just one indication of his kindly consideration for his flock.

The Bishop had a serious illness in 1264, which caused him to write from Bishop's Nympton to the Bishop of London and the other English bishops to excuse himself from attending the Parliament that had been summoned to meet at St Alban's on December 7th, and consequently he appointed two proctors to represent him thereat. Maybe his health was permanently impaired: anyhow, in 1278 he complained that he was oppressed and weighed down by the burden of care laid upon him by the exigencies of his official position, and he chose deputies to deal with all matters concerning himself and the Earl of Cornwall, on the score that he was laid aside by illness. The same cause prevented his attendance at Convocation in the spring of 1280, for which he wrote his apologies to the Archbishop from Sowton on May 14th. He did, indeed, travel to London once more, later in the same month, but that was the last time that he left his diocese; and, returning by Horsley and Faringdon, he made his way to his manor of Radway in Bishop's Teignton, where he breathed his last on July 22nd.§

* *Register*, 36, 305.
† *Itinerary*, 128.
‡ Oliver's *Lives*, 41; *Register*, xiii.
§ *Register*, 18, 54, 254.

Bronescombe appears to us as worthy of a place among the greatest of the Bishops of Exeter. He set before himself —and attained—a high standard of life and duty. Upright in character, loyal to Holy Church, and intent on ruling well his great diocese, his achievements were notable both in the sphere of government and in respect of initiation. Maybe he was somewhat hard and severe, more of a disciplinarian than a Father-in-God, and he was certainly (as a previous chapter shows) embroiled in many contentions with his Religious Houses; but his efforts to enforce obedience to ecclesiastical laws and regulations met with a fair measure of success; and, though not to be compared with the ubiquitous motor-car bishops of this generation, he was probably, when judged by the standard of that age, of good repute as a visitor of his diocese. As to new works initiated by him, he stands unrivalled at Exeter, for to his credit must be placed the founding of Glasney College, the revising of the Cathedral Statutes, the starting of the Episcopal Registers and of the Fabric Rolls of the Cathedral, and, above all, the planning and commencing of the new Cathedral —to which we shall advert at the close of this chapter. At the south-west corner of the Lady Chapel of his Cathedral, in the Chapel of St Gabriel, which he had well-nigh rebuilt (as well as the Chapel of St Mary Magdalene opposite to it), lies entombed his body, beneath his full-length effigy (probably contemporary); above which is a beautifully carved and richly dight arched canopy of the fifteenth century, with his epitaph of the same date, telling of his holy life and good works.*

Quot loca construxit pietatis, quot bona fecit,
Quam sanctam duxit vitam, vox dicere que scit?
Laudibus immensis jubilet Gens Exoniensis,
Et chorus, et turbe, quia natus in hac fuit Urbe.
Plus si scire velis, Festum statuit Gabrielis.
Gaudeat in Celis, igitur, Pater iste fidelis.

Our knowledge of the personal history of Peter Quivel, the last of the three successive bishops who were natives of

* *Register*, 38, 243.

Exeter, is not great. We are told the names of his parents, Peter and Helewisa, but nothing of his family, save that a John Quivel succeeded him at St Mullion and was afterwards instituted to Shobrooke. We first meet with him as Rector for several years of St Mullion, one of the most remote parishes in the diocese, being only five miles from Lizard Point and therefore almost the most southern place in England. This gave him a useful experience, such as would make him appreciate and sympathize with the difficulties of country parsons. He resigned his benefice in 1262 and became Archdeacon of St David's, a post for which his acquaintance with the Cornish language must have stood him in good stead. As such he continued till his elevation to the episcopate, but his former good work was recognised by Bishop Bronescombe, who made him a Prebendary of Exeter Cathedral in 1276. His consecration took place in Canterbury Cathedral, November 10th, 1280, Bishop Gravesend of London officiating instead of Archbishop Peccham.

The Primate, it should be noted, whose term of office (1279–1292) just overlapped that of Quivel (1280–1291), was always set in blind and violent hostility against the Bishop of Exeter, and never lost an opportunity of opposing him and thwarting his efforts. With the reason for this we are not made acquainted, but apparently it preceded the appointment of the latter; for the Archbishop had no valid excuse to offer for his extraordinary action in absenting himself from his own cathedral at the consecration of the bishop of an important diocese in his province; and it was more than a fortnight before the ceremony that he wrote to announce his non-attendance in terms that certainly constitute a slight, and might be read as a studied insult:—"We should desire personally to confer on you the rite of consecration in the Metropolitical Church of Canterbury on the Sunday before St Martin's Day; but, finding it a little inconvenient to be present in our own person (in propria persona aliquantulum impediti), we allow you to receive the rite at the hands of some of our Suffragans."*

In contrast to his predecessor, Quivel was one whose

* *Register*, xx.

work and influence were confined almost entirely to his own diocese. It is true that he was much of an absentee—as far as is revealed by the records, we learn that fully one third of his time was spent away—but he seems to have taken no prominent part in politics or State affairs; he was no intimate of the Royal Family, except when Edward I spent the Christmas of 1285 at Exeter and is said to have been lodged in the Palace; and he never crossed the sea, his travels being confined chiefly to visits to London and his episcopal manors; in a word he was more a domestic bishop than Bronescombe had been. He was also a more peace-loving prelate, and one who did not adopt such drastic remedies for evil-doing and abuses as had been the case before his time. We meet with few instances of his pronouncing the ban of excommunication, and, though on three occasions he called in the aid of the secular arm for the curbing of contumacious persons (one being Richard, Prior of Bodmin), he had not—so far as we can learn—serious quarrels either with laymen of high position, or with his clerics or Religious Houses.

One exception, however, must be made to this general statement, for there was war between the Bishop and the Dean of his early years. The narrative is a sufficiently amazing one, involving important issues, and affecting persons of high position in Church and State. The meaning of the event is obscure and mysterious, but our reading of it is that the good Bishop strove to prevent the appointment to the deanery of an unscrupulous though plausible worldling, who was backed with all his power by the Archbishop of Canterbury. Prompted by his animosity to Quivel, the Primate endeavoured to bolster up a bad case by influencing the King, and possibly the Pope, in favour of his unworthy *protégé*; but his efforts were futile, and, though the appointment was made, the Dean's brief tenure of office ended ignobly and disastrously for himself.

It seems that on the death of Dean John Noble in 1281, John Pycot, who was then the junior Canon of the Cathedral, was elected by the Chapter to succeed him; and, although Quivel appealed to the Pope against the election on the

ground of irregularity, the appointment was confirmed by the Primate. Against this confirmation he appealed again, but again Pycot came off victorious. What was the real reason for the Bishop's objection, and for his constant refusal even to acknowledge him as dean, is not made clear, but it must surely have been something worse than the fact that he held several benefices in plurality, besides his canonry or deanery.

Meanwhile, there was grave dissension in the Chapter concerning the appointment of an Archdeacon of Exeter, there being a papal nominee in the field. Some of the canons formed a party against him, and the leader of the opposition was Precentor Walter de Lecchelade, who forcibly took possession of the stall, residence, emoluments, and rights appertaining to that office. Lecchelade, it should be mentioned, enjoyed the full confidence of his diocesan, who in September, 1281, made him his Vicar General, with charge of the diocese and authority to act for him whenever—as often happened—he himself might be absent from his post; and it was from Quivel that he received the mark of highest honour by being appointed to the precentorship, whereby he took rank next after the Dean, and would act as president of the Chapter in his absence. It was he who in the Chapter was set in the strongest antagonism against the new Dean, and it looks as if he was put there with that in view, as his appointment followed close on Pycot's election.

Two years later there happened a horrible event. The Precentor, accompanied by some members of his household, was returning to his house (on the site of the present Chantry) after early Mattins in the Cathedral, when he was set upon in the Close by a band of miscreants, armed with swords and other weapons, and was brutally murdered (November 9th, 1283). His assailants got away, leaving the corpse lying in the mud, where it was found at daybreak; and it was never discovered who was guilty of the foul deed, though the crime was denounced and the murderers declared excommunicate in every church of the diocese. Twenty-one persons, however, were accused of complicity, Dean Pycot being one of them; and they were condemned, or at least the majority of them.

Eleven of these, being clerics, were committed to confinement in the Bishop's prison, and Pycot was of the number. Others were John de Cristenestowe, Vicar of Heavitree, John de Wolfrington, Vicar of Ottery, the Reverend William Pycot (perhaps a brother of the Dean), and Henry de Stanweye, who was doubtless a kinsman of the Dean's penultimate predecessor; so that the party of the defendants included men of good standing in ecclesiastical circles. A layman of highest rank too was with them—Alfred de la Porte (or Duport), at that time in his eighth year of office as Mayor of Exeter. He was found guilty, and was hanged, and together with him was executed the porter of Southgate, as they were both accounted responsible for the escape of the murderer, that gate being left open on the night of the murder.

In the meanwhile warfare was waging in North Devon. One of Dean Pycot's benefices was Heanton Punchardon, which the Bishop declared to be vacant, presumably as a consequence of the Dean's condemnation; and to it he instituted one Thomas de Doune, in defiance of an inhibition of the Archbishop, to whom Pycot had appealed. De Doune's contribution to the strife was to burn down the church of his new benefice—though the precise gain from this action is not apparent—and one version of the story declared that two men were consumed within the building. Anyhow, the Archbishop dispatched his commissary, William of Sardinia, to investigate the case on the spot; and at the same time summoned Bishop Quivel to appear in person before him, together with Thomas de Doune, in order to receive judgment. There is no proof that the Bishop obeyed this injunction, but there is proof that Doune kept his benefice, for he died as Rector of Heanton Punchardon thirty-five years later.

As for Dean Pycot, the Archbishop had interested himself further on his behalf, before the Heanton Punchardon episode, by endeavouring to move the King's Justices for the release of himself and his ten associates. Pycot, however, had to remain in prison till 1286, and somehow, whether by resignation or by deprivation, his office was vacated. Consequently on March 13th, 1285, Andrew de Kilkenny, a canon of less

than three years' standing and the successor of Lecchelade in the precentorship, was elected as Dean. The election was quite unanimous ("unanimiter, necnon concorditer, ab omnibus concanonicis suis, nemine reclamante, sed per omnium inspirationem"), and henceforth peace reigned in the Chapter, and happy relations existed between the Bishop and the Dean. Later, more than two years and a half having elapsed since the murder, Pycot gained his release; and Bishop Quivel, who still refused to describe him as ever having been Dean, sent his formal request to the King that "John, named Pycot, of Exeter, priest, who was arraigned for the murder of Master Walter de Lecchelade, of happy memory, formerly Precentor of the Church of Exeter, and by your Justices was committed to our prison," should now have his goods and chattels restored to him, "inasmuch as he has canonically purged himself before us of the aforesaid murder by trustworthy and discreet men, according to the liberty of the Church and the custom of the realm." The document bears date July 25th, 1286, and after that we hear no more of John Pycot. The name of Lecchelade, however, continued to be held in honour, for a Thomas de Lecchelade was appointed Chancellor in 1303, and elected Dean four years later.*

A concomitant of Quivel's love for peace was an indisposition to exercise firmness, and unwillingness to say "No" to a petitioner; which causes us to feel that as a disciplinarian he was more lax than his predecessor. A case in point was that of James de Hyspania, who appears to have been quite unsuitable as a candidate for a benefice, being not only a foreigner and of illegitimate birth, but also a mere youth. But he was a nephew of Eleanor of Castille, wife of Edward I, and his cause was pressed by both the King and the Queen. The Archbishop strenuously opposed the suit, and wrote entreating letters to both of their Majesties; but our Bishop first of all granted him a pension of £5 (£100), until such time as a benefice could be found for him, and in the following year (1283) made him a canon of Exeter Cathedral. Quivel, however, by no means stood alone in bestowing

* *Register*, 139, 233, 367, 438-450.

promotion on the royal favourite, for he obtained stalls also in the Cathedrals of London, York, Lincoln, Lichfield, Salisbury, Wells, and Dublin, as well as being Rector of half-a-dozen benefices.* This Spaniard was not the only foreigner who was thus provided for by the Bishop, for Salvagius of Florence was allowed £5 a year, whilst he was kept waiting for such a benefice as he would be willing to accept. Another regrettable case was that of Bartholomew de Seneschal, presented by his father to the living of St Erme in Cornwall. He was not in Holy Orders, and indeed was not yet of age to be ordained; but the Bishop weakly consented to institute him because of his aristocratic birth, and because his Lordship had a high regard for the youth and his parents.†

We read but little of those phases of diocesan work that were so prominent a feature of Bronescombe's episcopate—no formal Visitations or rounds of episcopal visits, no consecrating of churches or cemeteries, and only two Ordinations—one at Ashburton in 1281 for the conferring of Holy Orders upon incumbents, and the other an ordinary one in the Cathedral in the following year.‡ But he set before himself the fulfilling of two really great and noble ambitions, for which he deserves to be ever honourably remembered. One of these was the carrying on of the rebuilding of the Cathedral on more beautiful and more up-to-date lines—an undertaking which Bronescombe had begun right well, and which was carried to completion by his successors almost entirely in accordance with his plans; but of this we will treat later in this chapter. The other scheme was the general improving of his clergy, especially in respect to learning and to clerical efficiency.

With regard to this second task Bishop Quivel found himself faced by many difficulties. The old abuses of non-residence and pluralities were common as before, and there were still many incumbents in Minor Orders; but worse than these was the low standard of morals, and the frequency

* *The Guardian* for 1920, p. 1183.
† *Register*, 353, 372.
‡ *Register*, 365.

of crime—an evil so rife that the Rural Dean of Christianity was appointed "to seek out and take charge of all clerics imprisoned or arrested for any crimes by the King's Justices, and especially during their present progress through Devon" (1282). Such action would not in those days constitute an interference with the civil authority, for it must be borne in mind that these criminals could legally claim "benefit of clergy," whereby they would have to be handed over for punishment to the ecclesiastical powers. That the corruption was widespread is evidenced by some words of the Primate :— "The Church of England hath long been plagued with false clerks, who for worldly glory and out of covetousness, heaping benefice upon benefice, destroy souls purchased with the blood of the Redeemer, and lead an infamous life."*

If the clerical staff of the diocese was to be improved in life and work, it was first of all necessary that the Cathedral body should be made as efficient as possible, and to this Quivel gave his early attention. One means to this end was the founding of the office of Bishop's Penitentiary, whose holder was to act also as Subdean. He was to rank in Chapter and in processions next after the dignitaries and archdeacons, and in the choir was to occupy the stall next to that of the Archdeacon of Exeter, who sat on the Dean's right, and in some ways he was to act as Vice-Dean in the Dean's absence. He was to be in residence for eight months in the year, and once a year was to travel through the diocese in order to afford those who might be ill an opportunity of making their confessions, it being specially ordained that he was to receive his emoluments in full when absent on duty. He was to be kept free both from parochial duties and also from financial anxiety ; and therefore besides his prebend he was to have the endowments of Egloshayle, which with the consent of the Chapter was permanently attached to his office, but he was not to hold a cure (though only four months later the Bishop himself set aside this arrangement by instituting him to Whitstone in Cornwall). The first Penitentiary and Subdean was William de Bisiman, who was formally installed

* *Laws and Canons*, II, 299.

in the Cathedral by the Lord Bishop on July 7th, 1284. Furthermore, in order to make his Cathedral body independent of money cares, he appropriated to the Chapter the benefices of Broadhembury, Thorverton, Dunsford, and St Constantine, and endowed the precentorship with the livings of Chudleigh and Paignton, and the chancellorship with those of Stoke Gabriel and St Newlyn.

The Bishop was solicitous, too, about the stipends of the clergy of the diocese, and, backed by the authority of his Synod, he decreed that an assistant priest was to receive at least 50s. per annum (£50 in modern value); while a vicar was to have a minimum of five marks (£67), even in a poor parish, and that he was to have more if the tithe was worth over forty marks (£533). Evidently it was not necessary, or perhaps not possible, to legislate for rectors; for their incomes, accruing chiefly from tithes, were fixed, though it was found advisable to issue a clear definition as to what was to be tithed. But now that appropriations of benefices were becoming so numerous, the well-being of vicars had to be safeguarded; lest corporations, such as Religious Houses, should be able for a mere pittance to employ a deputy to perform the services in a church appropriated to them. This scale of payments seems lamentably low, even when we bear in mind that those were the days of an unmarried clergy, and that it was probably usual for them to engage in farming on a small scale; but that was not the opinion then, for it is added plainly that the vicar was expected to do some entertaining out of his allowance, and to lay by something for old age or sickness or other emergency.*

These emoluments were certainly below the average. It has been calculated that the usual clerical stipend in the time of *Domesday* was £2 3s. 4d. (£89). A Constitution of Archbishop Islip in 1362 fixed the allowance for a priest at £3 6s. 8d. (£60), and £4 (£71) for an assistant curate (the fees and offerings would go to the former). An advance to £4 13s. 4d. (£76) and £5 6s. 8d. (£87) respectively was made by a Constitution of Archbishop Sudbury in 1378; and in

* Synod, chapters 28, 53.

1439 a Constitution of Archbishop Chichele fixed £8 (£121) as a vicar's stipend.*

Another way in which the Bishop assisted his clergy pecuniarily was by making annual grants from his privy purse ("ex camera nostra") to some seemingly deserving man, until such time as a benefice could be found for him. He would thereby not only provide an income for the clergyman, but also retain him for work in his diocese, the sum varying according to circumstances from 20s. (£20) to 100s. (£100) per annum.

More remarkable was his effort to encourage learning in his clergy. Again and again we light upon an entry in his Register to the effect that this one or that has been granted licence of non-residence for one year or two years or three years, or even in one case five years, in order to study Theology or Canon Law, or occasionally Arts. Commonly the place named is Oxford, but often the student is sent to Paris, or sometimes he is allowed to choose either. Cambridge is never mentioned, but in one case a year at Exeter is thought sufficient. With the exceptions of the Archdeacon of Barnstaple and a canon of Chulmleigh this privilege is always extended to the rector of some remote country parish; and it must indeed have been a life's inspiration, as well as an intellectual boon, for an incumbent to be sent for a while to a seat of learning and a place of busy activity from such quiet corners of Devon as Berrynarbor and Clovelly, Lustleigh and Slapton, or from the far-off wilds of Cornwall like the neighbourhood of St Ervan or St Stythians, or Redruth or St Anthony-in-Roseland. Truly, these men were greatly beholden to their good Bishop.

But more than all these was Bishop Quivel's great endeavour to regulate the lives and the work of his clergy, and to provide them with a sort of *directorium*. This was effected by means of the Synod of Exeter, which met under his presidency in the year 1287—apparently the first instance of the kind in this diocese—and formed one of the chief features of his episcopate. In ordaining the holding of a Synod, however, Bishop Quivel was not striking out any

* *Provinciale*, 238, 240; *Trans. of Devon. Assoc.*, XXX, 312.

new line, but was really following in the wake of other diocesans, for the thirteenth century was an age of such meetings. The Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 led to the summoning of many English Synods, besides the two great Councils of the Church of England held at St Paul's Cathedral, the one under the presidency of Cardinal Otho in 1236 and the other thirty years later under Cardinal Ottobon. Thus Richard Poore commended the Lateran canons to his diocese at a Synod at Salisbury in 1223, the Scotch bishops did likewise next year at their Provincial Council, and similar action was taken by the Bishops of Lincoln, Worcester, Chichester, Durham, and other dioceses. There was ample precedent, then, for the Synod of Exeter, the more immediate incentive being supplied by the Council of Lyons in 1274, and by Archbishop Peccham's Councils at Reading and at Lambeth, held respectively in 1279 and 1283.*

The record of the proceedings is perhaps a little disappointing, for it deals more with generalities than with local events and circumstances, and therefore does not shed as much light as we should desire on the condition of the Church in the diocese of Exeter at that time; though it does indeed give us a most interesting and useful insight into the ecclesiastical matters of the Church of England of the latter part of the thirteenth century. For instance, the first of the fifty-five chapters that constitute the promulgations of the Synod, is merely a statement setting forth what are the Seven Sacraments, together with a few, not very illuminating, comments as to the meaning of each, and with this rather surprising classification, *viz.*, that Baptism and Penance are necessary—the former for all and the latter for adults; that Confirmation, the Eucharist, and Extreme Unction are not so necessary as those mentioned above, inasmuch as salvation is possible without them; and that Matrimony and Orders are voluntary.

Then follow seven chapters, one devoted to each Sacrament, with directions and regulations. Public Baptism is to be ministered twice a year, on Easter Eve and Whitsun Eve;

* G. G. Perry, I, 352, 371, 411; *Trans. of Devon. Assoc.*, XXV, 434; XXVI, 210.

and every child, who is to be immersed, is to have three Godparents and no more. In case of need the infant is to be baptized—also by immersion—at home; and priests are strictly charged to instruct their parishioners how to perform the rite, and to require that at a birth a vessel of water is to be at hand, so that the parents may be ready to act, if necessary. In that event the vessel is afterwards to be burnt, or reserved for sacred uses, and the water is to be poured into the font or upon a fire. Children are to be confirmed as soon as may be after being baptized, certainly before they are three years old, if the services of a bishop can be obtained; and if the parents wilfully defer their child's Confirmation longer, they are to fast on bread and water every Friday, until they perform their duty. For the Eucharist round wafers are to be provided, and there are to be two candles (no altar-cross is mentioned), and also two torches to burn during the Canon. Reservation of the Sacrament is ordered, but only for the sick, who are to be communicated in one species, though in church people receive in both kinds. In each deanery the Archdeacon is to select one or two of the best priests, who are to act as confessors for their brethren, without prejudice to the Penitentiary General of the diocese. Lay people are to make their confessions to their parish priest three times in the year—before Christmas, Easter, and Whitsunday—or at the least once, at the beginning of Lent; but the most grave cases are to be reserved, to be dealt with by the Penitentiary General. A strain of practical wisdom is evidenced in the direction that in cases of sickness doctors of the body are to move their patients to send for a doctor of the soul, inasmuch as it is not seldom the case that disease is the result of sin. It is pleasing to find that in those days the original object of the anointing of the sick with oil had not been relegated to the background, for it is plainly declared that Unction is beneficial to the body as a means of healing, though also to the soul by the remission of sins. Various safeguards are mentioned as preventives of any improper or clandestine marriages, among them being the thrice repeated publication of banns and the requirement that three witnesses must be

present at the ceremony. The essential formula was simply this—to be put into English dress—" Accipio ego te in meam : et ego te in meum." As to Orders it is curious to note that the fact that a candidate had been a judge or a lawyer would constitute irregularity, and would be a barrier to Ordination, such being objected to almost as much as homicides, incendiaries, violators of churches, and simoniacal persons. It is remarkable, too, that while bigamists and husbands of bad wives are not to be ordained, there is not a word in that same section condemning the marriage of priests. A later chapter, however, possibly means this, when it commands that clergy who openly keep concubines, are to put them away within a month.*

Very interesting is the catalogue of necessary " ornaments " of the church and of the minister, giving us an idea of what was considered the minimum required for an ordinary parish church with one altar. Fixtures or furniture were to include a sacrament-house (or aumbry) and a font (with cover), both of stone ; an image of the Blessed Mary, and one of the Patron Saint ; a chest for holding books and vestments ; a paschal candlestick, and a stand for candles ; two crosses, one fixed (the rood) and the other to be carried in processions and at funerals ; a bier with funeral pall ; a canopy over the altar, and glass windows in the chancel and the nave. For the altar there must be provided a frontal, a silver-gilt or silver chalice, a pyx of silver or ivory, three cruets, two corporals with burses, four cloths (one of them being ornamented), a wooden pax, a box for offerings, a censer and incense-box, and a Lenten veil. The priest must have two sets of vestments, one for festal and one for ferial use, and there must be two surplices and one rochet. There would further be wanted a marriage veil, a holy water vessel, a chrismatory (for holy oils), two processional candles and a lantern, a hand-bell for carrying to the sick or for the elevation of the Sacrament, and hand-bells for use at funerals, and also a bowl, that the priest might wash his fingers after communicating the sick. The list includes books—some twelve volumes for the different services or parts of the services, *viz.*,

* Chapters 2-8, 18.

missal, gradual, troper, manual, legend, antiphonary, psalter, ordinal, venitare, hymnal, collectar, and breviary; and each church was to procure a copy of the proceedings of the Synod. It is somewhat remarkable that so comprehensive a catalogue makes no mention of a paten, or a cope, or bells other than hand-bells; and altar-crosses and altar-candles were evidently not *de rigueur* at that period. Additional furniture was to be found for every extra altar, and the present rule was current then about obtaining a faculty from the Bishop for the erection of a side altar; and also the regulation that the parishioners have to keep the nave in order, the rector being responsible for the repair of the chancel.*

We notice a tacit admission that want of learning was widespread among the clergy, for the Synod can only attempt to cope with flagrant cases, the archdeacons being charged with the duty of finding out which rectors, vicars, or priests are grossly ignorant ("in literatura enormem patiuntur defectum"). The test to be applied is not a very searching one:—"Do they know and can they expound the Ten Commandments? Can they enumerate the Seven Deadly Sins, and do they warn their people to shun them? Can they name the Seven Sacraments, and do they know how each one is to be administered? And do they understand the Articles of the Christian Faith as set forth in the psalm 'Quicunque vult' and in the two Creeds?" Those who are very deficient in the knowledge of these matters are to be suspended from the exercise of their priestly functions.†

It is surprising that the clergy were not better informed concerning ecclesiastical matters, but the proceedings of the Synod declare that a great many priests make mistakes about festivals, one announcing to his people that a certain day is to be kept holy and no work done, while maybe in an adjoining parish the same day is not observed at all. Therefore, in order to put an end to this diversity, the list of Holy Days is now published, numbering fifty-eight (without reckoning ordinary Sundays). Those connected with our Lord's history are—Christmas (eight days), Circumcision,

* Chapters 9, 12.
† Chapter 20.

Epiphany, Easter Eve, Easter (four days), Ascension, Whitsun (four days), Discovery of the Cross, and Exaltation of the Cross. The Blessed Virgin Mary was commemorated for her Conception, Nativity, Annunciation, Purification, and Assumption. Apostles' and Evangelists' Days were those of St Peter's Chains, St Peter's Chair, St Peter and St Paul, Conversion of St Paul, St Andrew, St James, St John (Latin Gate), St Philip and St James, St Bartholomew, St Matthew, St Thomas, St Simon and St Jude, St Matthias, St Mark, and St Luke. Other New Testament Saints were St John the Baptist (Nativity and Beheading), St Mary Magdalene, St Barnabas, and St Michael. Besides these there were St Lawrence, St George, St Katharine, St Nicholas, St Martin, St Gregory, St Augustine of Canterbury, Translation of St Thomas Becket, All Saints, the Patron Saint, and the Dedication Festival. We might have expected the inclusion of Trinity Sunday in the list, for by this time that festival had won its way to acceptance in England, largely through the influence of Thomas Becket, though not yet made binding on the Western Church.*

The proceedings of the Synod are not altogether pleasant reading, for they abound in warnings and threats of excommunication for delinquencies and all kinds of failure in duty on the part of the clergy ; thus giving the impression that the standard of life and work was rather low, and that there was much need for the exercise of discipline. The laity, too, were by no means passed over in these respects, and the directions make it clear that the ban of excommunication—if fully observed—must have been terribly drastic ; for no one was to hold any communication with the excommunicate, not even eating or speaking or praying with him, else he too would share his curse. But all precautions were required to be taken, lest this discipline be wrongly used—the cause must be a serious one, the proof must be sufficient, the person concerned must first have three warnings, and the sentence was to be served on him in writing ; and furthermore, no one was to take this action in defence of his own personal rights.†

* Chapter 23.
† Chapters 43, 44.

There is a good deal in these chapters to indicate a need of reform. Abuses of non-residence and pluralities, and instances of incumbents not being in Holy Orders, are too frequent; some churches and houses are in ruinous condition, and there are churches that have been left unconsecrated; and it is found necessary to forbid the holding of markets, fairs, sports, and games in churchyards, the sacred buildings even not being immune from such profanation, or the conduct of service free from interruption from unseemly squabbles for the possession of special seats. The clergy have to be restrained from indulgence both in the serious vices of drunkenness and gluttony, and also in the venial sins of worldly vanity—a ban being placed upon the wearing of silk or coloured garments, and long sleeves, and the decking of riding-horses with gilt trappings. Acts of deceit, too, are so prevalent that notice has to be taken of them, condemnations being passed against clergymen who leave their parishes, but have the church bell rung in order to make people think that they are conducting their daily services as usual; and against such as attempt to cover their neglect in not providing their church with the necessary "ornaments," by borrowing from a neighbour when the Archdeacon comes round on visitation, and declaring that the articles belong to the place.*

The encouraging of the well-being of the Church and of the satisfactory working of its system was to be very largely the care of the archdeacons, on whom was laid the enormous duty of visiting personally each parish annually, one special function being an examination of the apparatus or "ornaments" of each church, and another an enquiry as to whether the clergy were obedient to the rule that they should sing the daily offices on festivals and say them on every ferial day. A stimulus to the clergy was to be afforded by their being summoned—by the archdeacon's arrangement—to meet in Chapter every month at convenient centres, each conference being limited to one day. These meetings were to be presided over by the rural deans (decani rurales), who by this time had taken their place as a fully recognised class of episcopal officials.†

* Chapters 8, 10, 12, 13, 16, 17, 19, 21.

† Chapters 10, 21, 31, 40.

The history of this Synod is not recorded. We only know that the clergy of the diocese assembled in the Cathedral; and we must surmise that the lengthy document, composed previously, was read to them—probably in one day, April 16th, by which the proceedings are dated—and that those present were called upon to give their general assent, any detailed discussion on so wide a range of subjects being out of the question. The Bishop would thus be enabled to claim the support of the Synod in his rulings, the oft-recurring expression being this:—"With the approval (or, sometimes, By the authority) of this Synod we decree that . . . ." "Praesentis synodi approbatione (or, auctoritate) statuimus." Some idea of the powers—they were more than pretensions—of a thirteenth century bishop, backed by his Synod, may be gathered by his presuming to legislate in matters purely secular, and even concerning persons who were not Christians:—he decreed who might and who might not act as executors of wills, and in some cases went so far as to regulate the allocating of a testator's property; and he ordered Jews to wear a distinctive mark on their dress, and to keep at home on Good Friday with doors and windows closed, lest they should mock Christians on a day of sorrow.*

In order that the proceedings of the Synod might not be in danger of passing into oblivion, it was enacted that they should be read once a year at Chapter Meetings, and every parish priest was to possess himself of a copy, and to digest it so thoroughly that he would be able to explain its decisions to his congregation in their mother tongue.†

We could wish that our bishop had absented himself less from his diocese, and especially that he had devoted more of his time and attention to the Cornish portion (so far as we can learn from his Register, which however is not a complete record, he crossed the Tamar only five times, and his brief visits totalled barely five weeks). But apart from those defects, his episcopate seems to have been a prosperous and happy one, the chief ruler being a good man, a devoted and generous churchman, and a sympathetic and

* Chapters 7, 49, 50.
† Chapter 55.

kind diocesan. He had his troubles, but apart from the vexing hostility of his Metropolitan and the conflict with Dean Pycot, the only serious one was money difficulty; and from that he was able to shake himself free in his first few years, though for a while he had to saddle himself with heavy loans—£113 (£2,295) at the time of his enthronization from Sir Richard Tantefer of Exeter, £100 (£2,031) from Edmund, Earl of Cornwall, 100 marks (£1,354) from Sir Mauger de Sancto Albino, and 50 pounds of silver from William de Monketone, Seneschal of Cornwall.

We know nothing of the close of his episcopate; but he died on October 1st, 1291, and his body lies in the centre of the Lady Chapel of the Cathedral beneath a great marble slab, whose only lettering is this punning hexameter concerning the signification of his name Peter:—"Petra tegit Petrum nichil officiat sibi tetrum" ("A stone covers Stone: may stone do no harm to Stone").

During Quivel's episcopate there happened an important occurrence, which fortunately gives us information concerning Church finance, so far as concerns clerical stipends, and also tells us somewhat of the organization of the Church in the diocese. Edward I, always intent on extracting from the Church as much money as possible, succeeded in obtaining from the Pope his formal sanction for an annual tax of 3s. 4d. in the pound on all ecclesiastical revenues, the impost to continue for six years. Avowedly the money was to be given for the support of the Crusades, but actually it went into the King's privy purse. The tax was reckoned on a new valuation, known as the Taxation of Pope Nicholas IV, and completed in 1291, which accentuated the existing distress and discontent of the clergy, as it was more exacting and severe than former valuations had been. Secular clerics, however, whose stipends were less than six marks (£79), were exempted from paying.

The Taxation shows that the diocese then comprised 4 archdeaconries, 36 deaneries, and 567 parishes (397 in Devon and 170 in Cornwall). The parishes were grouped in deaneries thus:—*A*. Archdeaconry of Exeter—The City (of Exeter) 20, Kenn 16, Dunkeswell 10, Plymtree 15, Tiverton 16, Dunsford 17, Cadbury 12, Honiton 16, Aylesbeare 20.

B. Archdeaconry of Totnes—Totnes 15, Ipplepen 10, Plympton 11, Tamerton 12, Tavistock 15, Moreton 11, Holsworthy 17, Okehampton 14, Woodleigh 16. *C*. Archdeaconry of Barnstaple—Barnstaple 13, Chulmleigh 13, Molton 29, Torrington 18, Hartland 14, Shirwell 28. *D*. Archdeaconry of Cornwall—St German's 2, Lawhitton 3, Penryn 5, Pawton (Polton) 5, East (Estwyvelschyre) 19, West (Westwivelschyre) 18, Powder (Poudreshire) 26, Kerrier 15, Penwith 18, Pydar (Pydershire) 11, Trigg Minor 18, Trigg Major 27. Besides these there were 3 Peculiars of the Bishop and 19 of the Chapter, which were reckoned as extra-decanal. The chief differences between that arrangement and the present are that there are now 6 archdeaconries, that of Bodmin being constituted on the division of the diocese in 1877, and that of Plymouth in 1918; the tiny deaneries of St German's, Lawhitton, Penryn, and Polton no longer exist, and the names of Dunkeswell, Plymtree, Dunsford, and Tamerton have disappeared; whereas there are these new deaneries—Cullompton, Ottery, The Three Towns, Stratton, St Austell, Bodmin, North Carnmarth, and South Carnmarth; and there are now 758 parochial benefices, 521 being in the Exeter diocese and 237 in that of Truro.

Of deep interest is the information to be gleaned concerning ecclesiastical incomes. The Bishop received as revenue nearly £462 (£9,102) from his nineteen manors (twelve in Devon and seven in Cornwall), the most valuable being Bishop's Tawton, Paignton, and Pawton, each of which was worth over £51. The twenty manors of the Dean and Chapter brought in about £140 (£2,758), Sidbury and Branscombe producing most; and in addition their "spiritualia" were reckoned at £102 11s. 8d. (£2,019). The Dean's stipend amounted to £56 (£1,103), and besides he held the benefice of Colyton, which was worth £6 13s. 4d. (£131), and he drew £1 (£20) from Georgeham. The Precentor received £30 (£581), accruing from the livings of Chudleigh and Paignton. The emoluments of the Chancellor were £40 (£788), being the income of Stoke Gabriel and St Newlyn. The Treasurer's income was £20 (£394)—the tithes of Bishop's Nympton, besides the revenue of St Probus—£12 (£236). The Peniten-

tiary, who was also Subdean, got £5 (£99) from Egloshayle and 30s. (£29) from St Just-in-Roseland, and he had his prebend in addition. In those days of a celibate clergy the Cathedral dignitaries were undeniably well provided for.

The case of the parochial clergy was different, and the lot of the ordinary incumbent must have been a hard one, in the great majority of cases. True, there were some "plums," such as the rectories of Axminster, which was worth £51 6s. 8d. (£1,011); and Kenton, North Molton, Plympton, Stokenham, and West Alvington, each worth £33 6s. 8d. (£657); and Hartland and Ilfracombe, £26 13s. 4d. (£525); and St Keverne, £22 13s. 4d. (£447); and Bradworthy, Great Torrington, Ottery St Mary, Paignton, St Buryan, Tawstock, and Witheridge, £20 (£394); but the average stipend of a rector was about £6 10s. 0d. (£128), and that of a vicar about £2 6s. 8d. (£46). The system of appropriations was certainly a flagrant abuse, the bulk of the endowment, which was intended for the parish priest, being diverted to support some distant Religious House or an absent rector, while the acting incumbent received a mere pittance. Thus the vicar of the lucrative Kenton was granted only £3 10s. 0d. (£69), of Stokenham £2 13s. 4d. (£51), of West Alvington £3 13s. 4d. (£72), of St Keverne £4 6s. 8d. (£85), of Bradworthy £4 (£79); while in so important a place as Tavistock the great tithes, valued at £16 (£315), were kept by the Abbot and monks, who allowed the vicar 13s. 4d. (£13) only. The best paid vicars were those of Ottery St Mary and St Neot, £6 13s. 4d. (£131), Brixham, £6 (£118), Dawlish and Paignton, £5 6s. 8d. (£103), and Broadclyst, £5 (£98)—rather meagre sums compared with the stipends of assistant curates in the early years of the twentieth century; and the case of the poor vicar of Tavistock was by no means exceptional, there being quite a number who were even worse paid than he. As already stated, parochial clergy, whose stipend was less than six marks (£79), were exempted from the tax of 1291, and the numbers of such (excluding prebendaries, but including those in charge of parochial chapels) reached the appalling total of 294; and though at that time there were only 137 vicarages in

the diocese (75 in Devon and 62 in Cornwall), that number was constantly rising, as more and more benefices were appropriated to Religious Houses, so that the class of underpaid incumbents was ever increasing. This constituted a grave evil in the Church, even more than the strange anomaly, whereby tithes, which were given for the provision of spiritual ministrations in King's Teignton, were alienated for the benefit of Salisbury, those of St Keverne for Beaulieu, those of St Crowan and St Wenn for Tewkesbury, those of St Gwinear for St Peter's at Oxford, and those of St Cleer for the Hospital of St John in Jerusalem.

The Taxation also reveals to us the financial condition of the Religious Houses by telling in detail the income of each from both ecclesiastical and secular endowments; though it must be borne in mind that we have here only the moneys that accrued from within the diocese, and that consequently in some cases this statement may be incomplete, especially in border places like Forde and Canonsleigh. The Mendicant Orders were exempt from the impost, so there is nothing to be learnt about them. As for the others, the outstanding feature is the poverty of a number of the smaller foundations.

In Devon at that time Plympton Priory (with an annual revenue of £99, *i.e.*, £1,950,) and Tavistock Abbey (£98) were very affluent; and other wealthy ones were Dunkeswell Abbey (£64, *i.e.*, £1,261), Otterton Priory (£47), Buckland Abbey (£43), Buckfast Abbey (£42), Forde Abbey (£41), Torre Abbey (£36), Hartland Abbey (£33), and Newenham Abbey (£32). Polslo Priory (£19, *i.e.*, £374), St Nicholas's Priory at Exeter (£18), Cowick Priory (£17), and Canonsleigh Abbey (£15), all show a somewhat unsatisfactory balance-sheet; Totnes Priory (£10, *i.e.*, £197) and Barnstaple Priory (£9) must have been weighted by financial anxiety; and very existence would be decidedly difficult for Marisco Priory and Pilton Priory (£6, *i.e.*, £118), St James's Priory at Exeter (£5), Frithelstock and Cornworthy and Carswell Priories (£4), and Modbury Priory (£2, *i.e.*, £39). No mention is made of Ipplepen Priory. In Cornwall the three Priories of Launceston (£77, *i.e.*, £1,517), Tywardreath (£58), and Bodmin (£43) were prosperous, and St German's (£32) and St

Michael's Mount (£24) were in comfortable circumstances; but Minster (£1, *i.e.*, £19) was poverty-stricken, and no count is taken of Tregony, St Cyricus, and Lammana; St Anthony-in-Roseland seems to have been reckoned with St German's; and Tresco was too remote to make it worth while to include it.

It seems probable that, when Bronescombe became Bishop, he found two cathedrals standing. To the east, on the site occupied by the present Lady Chapel, was the Saxon church, in whose crypt Leofric's body had been interred; and west of that was the building commenced by William Warelwast, completed by Marshal, and furnished by Bruere. But the two were not quite in the same straight line, for they were differently orientated, the east end of the Saxon fane being inclined more to the south than was the case with the other. Now St Peter was commemorated in the dedications of both, but in the earlier one the Apostle occupied only the second place, for we are told that King Athelstan rebuilt the minster "to the honour of God and the heavenly Queen, Holy Mary, the mother of Christ, and St Peter." The sun would rise a good deal further south on March 25th than on June 29th, so if the Saxon church was orientated on Lady Day and the Norman cathedral on St Peter's day, the difference in the disposition of the two buildings would be accounted for. If, then, it was desired to unite the two so as to form one fabric, a practical difficulty would stand in the way, namely that one was not in line with the other. That however was Bronescombe's ambition, and, as he began operations at the east end, it was natural that he should decide to rebuild the Saxon church on new foundations, rather than alter the position of the much larger Norman structure. His work, then, was to pull down the old building almost entirely, erecting on the site a Lady Chapel; and to extend the structure westwards, so as ultimately to incorporate the western building, forming together one cathedral; though before that could be done, the Norman fabric must first be transformed so as to harmonize with the style of the new work. The part that Bronescombe was able to accomplish was the erecting of the lower part of the walls of the present cathedral, reaching from the east end as far west as to include the chapels of St Andrew

and St James, north and south of the choir. The arcading on either side in the Lady Chapel and the north and south windows of the retro-choir and of the chapels that flank the Lady Chapel are his work, and are all Early English in style.

His successor Peter Quivel had been one of his canons, and doubtless they had united in the planning of the scheme, for he threw himself zealously into the task of carrying on what his patron had begun. Just at this time, however, architecture was undergoing a change, and the new bishop adopted the new style, which was already in vogue in most other places; so that the continuation of Bronescombe's work was of Decorated character, and this was faithfully followed until the Cathedral was completed seventy years later. His episcopate was rather short, but during that time he was successful in achieving much. He finished the fabric of the Lady Chapel and its side chapels; he constructed the presbytery (the eastern half of the choir) as far as the roof, together with its aisles; he transformed the easternmost bay of the nave to harmonize with his other work; and he did the like with the two towers, opening up the archways between them and the nave, inserting larger and more ornate windows in place of the old plain ones, and altering to his own style the Chapels of St Paul and St John the Baptist, from which the towers take their names.

Here, then, was the inauguration of this great undertaking. The two bishops, Bronescombe and Quivel, had determined the lines on which the new Cathedral was to be moulded. They had not only created the Lady Chapel, which might be treated by their successors as a separate and independent edifice; but they had actually completed one half of the choir and the east end of the nave, so that future builders had practically no alternative but to carry on the work as they had begun it. What had still to be done was more in amount than what had been already accomplished; yet, because the plans were no mere drawings on parchment, but had been to so great an extent translated into stone fabric, there could be no departing from those designs. Those who were to complete the Cathedral would be builders indeed, but Bronescombe and Quivel were the architects.

CHAPTER VIII.

OTHER CATHEDRAL BUILDERS.

THERE are few of the Exeter bishops of whom so little is known personally as Thomas de Bytton, and the history of the diocese during his fifteen years' rule is almost a blank, the reason being that his Episcopal Register is not in existence, having been lost, if—as seems most probable—it ever did exist. Of himself we can say that he was of good family, his father being Sir Adam de Bytton, Knight, of Bytton in Gloucestershire, a few miles east of Bristol; and an uncle, William de Bytton, was Bishop of Bath and Wells, in which see he was succeeded by another nephew, also named William de Bytton. Both these prelates passed away a number of years before their kinsman was elevated to the bench, but doubtless it was his family connection that obtained for him the deanery of Wells, which he held till his consecration on April 1st, 1292. He already had a footing in the Exeter diocese, being one of the five canons of St Probus Collegiate Church in Cornwall; but this circumstance did not avail to expedite his appointment, as a six months' vacancy followed the death of Quivel. In after years he showed his affection for his old home and the tombs of his parents by erecting in Bytton Church a chantry-chapel, which in recent times has been restored as a memorial of him.*

So far as we know, Bytton's greatest claim for our grateful remembrance is the splendid work that he accomplished as the builder of a considerable and very important part of the Cathedral, the fabric of the beautiful choir being almost entirely his creation. First of all he seems to have put the finishing touches to Bronescombe's and Quivel's

* *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, VIII, 100; *Register*, xxiii; Oliver's *Bishops*, 52.

almost completed structure, painting the forty-nine bosses and the vaulting of the Lady Chapel and its side chapels with gold and silver and blue and other colours at the great cost of £26 (£512); and then, in 1303, roofing with lead the same chapel and other parts of the newly erected building. He was thus free to devote his whole attention to the presbytery and the choir, the former of which had been left in an advanced state by Quivel. Bytton continued the former, and meanwhile had the latter in course of construction. The opening years of the fourteenth century must have seen the ending of the work on the presbytery, for in 1302 glass was purchased at the cost of £29 (£563) to fill the great east window, the gable window above, and the two nearest clerestory windows; and soon after, six more windows in the clerestory were glazed, as well as six others in the aisles, the glass for each of the upper ones costing £6 4s. 1d. (£119), and the lower ones £4 8s. 7d. (£85). At the same time the three steps before the high altar were put in place, Hamhill stone being used for the purpose, and 11,000 flooring tiles were laid down at 11s. (£10 10s. 0d.) per thousand. Portland stone was bought for the bosses of the vaulting, and they were carved on the spot, those in the middle for 5s. (£5) each, and those in the aisles at 3s. 6d. (£3 10s. 0d.). Finally the aisles were roofed with lead, though it was left to another prelate to do likewise for the choir.

Thus it appears that when Bytton died in 1307 the eastern half of the church was practically complete, so that Stapeldon's first work was to colour the bosses of the vaulting, and then he took in hand the furnishing of the presbytery and the choir. It is evident that the fabric of the choir is differentiated from that of the presbytery. Bytton found the old structure there, occupying the place of the present three western bays, the apse having extended eastwards to the length of one bay more; and that Norman structure he transformed and altered so as to harmonize with Quivel's new work further east. But certain details show that the two halves belong to two different architects, for Bytton's piers are a little smaller than Quivel's, and the old chamfered plinth above the wall seat is retained in the western, but not in the eastern

part of the south aisle of the chancel. These and other slight indications, however, are not noticeable except to a careful observer, and the work of those two great bishops forms one admirable whole—admirable for the striking beauty of the clustered pillars of Purbeck marble, and the richness of the many-moulded arcades and the ribbed vaulting, and the divers colouring of the blue and the red and the cream-coloured stone ; and admirable especially for the variety and the gracefulness of the tracery of the windows, which all differ from each other, except that every *vis-à-vis* pair are alike.*

We learn from the Fabric Rolls that the usual complement of workmen employed at the Cathedral was thirty or thirty-five, and that the weekly wages of a builder were 2s. 3d. (£2 3s. 4d.), a carpenter 1s. 8d. (£1 12s. 4d.), a sawyer 1s. 1½d. (£1 1s. 10d.), a stonemason 9d. (14s. 7d.) or 10d. (16s. 2d.), and a labourer 9d. (14s. 7d.). Golofre, who is described as a stonemason, received 7s. (£7) a week, and was probably a clerk of the works. For those years whose record has been preserved in the Fabric Rolls, the average annual expenditure upon the work was £184 (£3,238 in modern value.)†

The body of Thomas de Bytton lies interred in the midst of the edifice on which he lavished so much care and skill, at the foot of the steps that lead to the high altar ; but his chalice and paten and his gold ring with large sapphire have been abstracted from his tomb, and are preserved as curiosities in the chapter-house.‡

There is but little that can be recovered concerning the state of the diocese during this episcopate, but that little is valuable, for the records of the Visitation in 1301 of their appropriated benefices by the Dean and Chapter tell us something of incumbents and churches that ought to be among the best in Devon.§

* Oliver's *Bishops*, 52, 177, 379, 392 ; *Archit. Hist. of Ex. Cath.*, 19-30 ; *Architect. Review*, V, 13.

† Oliver's *Bishops*, 392-497.

‡ Oliver's *Bishops*, 54 ; *Register*, xxv.

§ Stapeldon's *Register*, 109, 111, 130, 132, 170, 185, 193, 197, 198, 337, 338, 345, 368, 369, 378, 380, 388, 397, 409.

At Sidbury all was in excellent order, save that the roof of an aisle was in poor condition and a few books were badly bound. Mention is made of the wedding veil and the Lenten veil, which few churches were without, and also of the copy of the Canons of the Synod of Exeter, which every church was supposed to possess, though not all did so. There were three surplices and two rochets, and three surplices for boys. The vicar was a good preacher, and did his duty right well, the only criticism being that he gave no teaching about mortal sin: his assistants too were exemplary. The report of Salcombe Regis was not altogether unfavourable, but some of the books were old, and were rotten, because the vicar had let them lie in a damp place; the image of the Patron Saint (the Blessed Virgin Mary) was old and damaged; and the chancel roof was bad, though that was being restored. Branscombe was indeed fortunate in its vicar, for not only had he given an organ and a new Antiphonary with Psalter, but he was a man who preached frequently and visited the sick and devoted himself to all the duties of his office. His church books, however, were not in satisfactory order, and the glass in the big window of the tower was broken, while the small window had no glass at all. The vicar of Colyton was a man of upright life, but he failed to respond when called upon to visit his sick, and exception was taken to his preaching as regards both quality and quantity; nor would he take the trouble to invite Brothers to come to instruct his flock, as his predecessors had been wont to do. The chapel at Shute in his parish was in poor condition, and in wet weather there could not be any Celebration, as the chancel was unroofed. The curate had no house of residence, and had to sleep in the chapel, though the door was broken and had no fastening.

No fault was found with Upottery except that the Antiphonary was worn out; but six years later another set of Visitors discovered that the chancel roof had fallen into disrepair, the canopy over the high altar was wanting, and the secular buildings were in bad condition. No details are mentioned concerning either Buckerell or Broadhembury, and we infer that there was nothing amiss there. This was certainly the case at Culmstock, where the vicar was

spoken of in the highest terms, and it is reported that besides the pyx hanging over the altar there was another for carrying the Sacrament to the sick. Not a word is spoken about Thorverton except as regards its temporal possessions. Of Stoke Canon we learn that the vicar was a good man, and that religious matters were well attended to; but the ornaments of the church were neglected—the two surplices were in poor condition and the rochet was old, there was only one cruet and the chrismatory lacked a fastening, there was no frontal and the books were not satisfactory. At Colebrooke the vicar bore an evil repute, and was neglectful of his duties, preaching as he pleased, and teaching little about the Articles of the Faith or the Decalogue or mortal sins. He did not sing Mattins on high days, and on ferials he celebrated only on alternate days. His house was in a ruinous condition, and it was his fault that there were defects in the roof of the chancel and of the nave, and that the font had no fastening, and the chrismatory too. The secular buildings at Winkleigh were in very bad repair, but nothing is said of the church and its contents, except that the books were satisfactory save for the *Legenda Sanctorum*.

Turning to the south of the county, we learn that all was quite right at Dawlish; but a sad report is given of St Mary Church. There the vicar, who was said to have appropriated church funds, allowed his live stock to pasture in the churchyard, and even used the church as a store-house and brewery. He was an able preacher, and performed his duties well, when he was there; but he was often absent for a week or a fortnight, and he had no assistant curate to take his place. Consequently there was a miserable tale of neglect—the nave and the tower wanted roofing, the chancel windows were out of repair, many books were in bad order, there was only one surplice and that was full of holes, the rochet was in like condition, there was no pyx for the Eucharist, and of the three vestments only one was presentable. Nor were the daughter-churches at Coffinswell and King's Kerswell much better. Of the former the nave roof was defective, the chancel windows were too small and had no glass, and the canopy over the altar was badly damaged; and the chancel roof

at the latter needed repair and its windows lacked glass, the fastening of the font was gone, the processional cross was old and worn, several books were missing, and the chapel was dilapidated, though that was being restored. Ashburton was more happily circumstanced, for the vicar bore a first-rate character; and, though the tower was not yet covered with lead, the work was in hand. The nave, indeed, was too dark; but no other strictures were passed, save that the pyx, which was of wood only and had no lock, was not suspended over the altar, and that the chalice was too small, its weight being scarcely half a mark. Happier still was Staverton, whose church was generously furnished with books and vestments, though the cope and the frontal of the high altar were both worn out. The vicar was beyond all reproach, being in every respect exemplary, and one who taught his people exceedingly well. At Harberton, too, all was right in the church, the chancel having been recently rebuilt at the charges of the Chapter, but the rectory buildings had fallen or were ready to fall.

Chapter livings were among the most lucrative in the diocese, and the patrons would doubtless be able to secure for them incumbents whose qualities were above the average; so this review of twenty churches and chapels seems to indicate that Church conditions in the diocese were not altogether what they should be. The two scandalous cases of Colebrooke and St Mary Church, which must have been very much under his eyes, may be taken as proof that during his nine years Bishop Bytton had not succeeded in enforcing strict discipline on the clergy of his diocese; and from the Visitors' reports we draw the inference that the number of churches, whose fabric and furniture were ill cared for, was considerable. On the other hand, however, it is evident that many incumbents were really men of God and lovers of their people, and that many churches were both well served and well ordered.

There is nothing else to chronicle concerning the diocese during Bishop Bytton's time, beyond the fact that he held a Visitation of Crediton Collegiate Church and gave it a new code of statutes. Furthermore, he obtained a market for

Newport by Barnstaple, and for Paignton—one of the episcopal manors ; and he effected the appropriation of several rectories —West Down to St John's Hospital at Wells (where he had been Dean), Walkhampton to the neighbouring Abbey of Buckland, Burrington to Tavistock Abbey instead of Whitchurch, and St Eval to the Dean and Chapter as a means of providing for his own annual obit in the Cathedral.*

Bytton's will has not been preserved, but the extraordinarily full *Account of the Executors* is extant, and gives us a detailed conspectus of the possessions of the see and of his own personal property, together with much interesting information about his obsequies. His wealth was certainly great. The annual profits of the twenty-four episcopal manors were estimated at £2,000 (£34,783) ; official fees amounted to £1,190 (£22,765) ; his ready money, plate, jewels, and other valuables were worth £1,282 (£24,525), and the contents of his chapel £96 (£1,837) ; his household goods were reckoned at £166 (£3,176), and his horses and vehicles at £61 (£1,167) ; and debts and other dues ought to bring in £716 (£13,697) ; so that his estate exceeded £5,500 (in modern value £105,217). The expenditures of the executors included legacies to more than two hundred persons and places, among them being thirty-three Religious Houses of the diocese. Tavistock Abbey was the most highly honoured, doubtless as the most important, and received £20 (£383). Newenham had special consideration because there was church-building going on, and came in for £13 6s. 8d. (£255). The great Abbeys of Hartland and Torre and the Priory of St German's got £10 (£191) each, Forde Abbey and Launceston Priory £6 13s. 4d. (£128), and the other chief monasteries (Buckland, Buckfast, Dunkeswell, Plympton, Bodmin) £5 (£96). There were twelve priories of inferior station, and to most of them was bequeathed £2 (St Nicholas's at Exeter, Totnes, Otterton, Tywardreath, Frithelstock, Barnstaple, Pilton, Cowick, St Michael's Mount), and to the three smallest £1 6s. 8d. (St James's at Exeter, Minster, Modbury). To the ladies of Canonsleigh, Polslo, and Cornworthy he was very generous, leaving £13 6s. 8d. (£255)

* *Register*, xxiv.

to each of the two former, and £6 13s. 4d. (£128) to the last. St John's Hospital had structural work in hand, and was helped to the extent of £20 (£383), while St Mary Magdalene's Hospital was granted £3 6s. 8d. (£64). The friars, too, were well treated, £20 (£383) being left to the Franciscans of Exeter for their church-building, and £6 13s. 4d. (£128) to the Dominicans, and their brethren at Bodmin and Truro receiving £5 (£96) each. Among the legatees were numbered also as many as forty leper-houses, whose benefactions ranged from 33s. (£32) at Tavistock and 30s. (£29) at Exeter and Launceston (evidently the biggest establishments) down to 1s. (19s.) at Denbury and 6d. at Sancreed. Here is a revelation of the common prevalence of this terrible malady, and also of the widespread efforts to care for the poor sufferers—as many as seventeen lazar-houses in Devon and twenty-three in Cornwall, and the provision of separate hospitals in places so close together as Barnstaple and Pilton, or St Madron and Sancreed and Mousehole. There were other legacies to religious bodies and to many needy persons, and the Cathedral came in for over £600 (£11,478) as residuary legatee. Verily we cannot but be impressed by the contrast in this respect between those times and ours: modern prelates have family calls that must be answered, but in the days of an unmarried clergy the Church and the poor had the first—perhaps almost the only—consideration, when a bishop was making his will.

Bytton's funeral expenses are fully detailed in the *Account of the Executors*, even down to the fee of 6s. 8d. (£6) to a surgeon for washing and vesting the corpse, and 2s. 4d. (£2) for the lead coffin, and 9s. 4d. (£9) for a silver chalice to be buried with the body. The total sum was over £142 (£2,717), and included a gift of a penny (1s. 7d.) to each of the 235 prisoners in Exeter gaol (with 1s. apiece extra to 12 of them who belonged to the clerical order), and 1s. (19s.) to each of 3 clerks in the Bishop's prison. The enormous number of 10,212 poor persons at Exeter received a dole of a penny on the day of the funeral (at the funeral of Bishop Gravesend of London four years previously a similar dole was given to as many as 36,288 persons), and the distribution

was repeated to 6,348 at the memorial service thirty days later. Other sums were expended on the ringing of bells of thirty-four churches of Exeter, on services in the city and elsewhere in the diocese, and on various charities to religious persons and to the needy. Truly the burying of a bishop was a big event in the fourteenth century.*

Devon has just reason for proud satisfaction in the contemplation of the life and work of Walter de Stapeldon; for by origin and birth he was her own son, and he brought to his native county a fair renown both from the homeland and from abroad, and proved himself one of her chief benefactors, both civilly and ecclesiastically. Indeed, he stands forth as the one admirable personality among the prominent men and women of his generation—wise, honourable, public-spirited, and loyal, while others were feeble, unreliable, and self-seeking.

Of his parents we know no more than their names—William and Mabilla—but they are said to have owned the estate of Annery in the parish of Monkleigh, where their distinguished son was born in or about 1260. There were two other sons, who were also men of mark, though in less degree. Sir Richard, the eldest son, was a Puisne Judge of the King's Bench, and resided at Stapeldon Manor in the parish of Cookbury near Holsworthy. He was the patron of six benefices within the diocese and one without, and was associated with the Bishop as co-founder of Exeter College, Oxford. The other was Thomas, who at various times held six livings in the diocese, was Prebendary successively of Crediton, Bosham, and Exeter, and was commissioned by his episcopal brother, when absent from the diocese, to collate suitable clergymen to benefices, and was one of the executors of his will. There was also a Robert de Stapeldon, probably another brother, who was Rector of Tawstock, Prebendary of Crediton and of Exeter, and Proctor for the Bishop in Parliament. We have no mention of any visit paid to Monkleigh by the Bishop, but he evinced much interest in Frithelstock Priory in the adjoining parish, becoming a generous patron of that House.

* *Register*, xxiv; Oliver's *Bishops*, 52; H. Reynolds, 95.

The future Bishop was a man of some note, for besides being Rector of Aveton Giffard, he had been made Professor of Canon Law at Oxford, and held honourable rank as a Chaplain of Pope Clement V, and was a Canon and Precentor of Exeter Cathedral. But, although the members of the Chapter joined in a unanimous vote, it was not till October 13th, 1308, exactly eleven months after his election, that the Primate (Winchelsey) granted him consecration in Canterbury Cathedral. The long delay was due partly to the Archbishop's perverseness and misfortunes, and partly to the foolish and unwarranted obstruction of Richard de Plympstoke, Rector of Exminster and Uffculme, who—apparently as an act of spite—raised objections against nine of the voters, and sent an appeal to the Pope. This Plympstoke was a man of dubious character: he had already in Bishop Bytton's time been in trouble owing to an unpaid debt, and now he was plotting to get himself appointed Archdeacon of Exeter by falsely representing to the King that that post was vacant, and pressing his candidature. Later he gave much trouble by failing for long to liquidate a debt of 100 marks (£1,245) to the Abbot of Tavistock and another of £12 (£226) to the estate of William de Hameltone; and he even broke into the house of one of his parishioners at Exminster, and carried off goods to the value of 100 marks. The sentences of excommunication and of deprivation of his benefices seem to have been not unmerited.*

The consequences of these delays were most distressing to the Bishop-elect, for, besides divers other heavy expenses, the appeal cost him £266 (£4,650); and though nominally the temporalities were restored, he could get scarcely any money, and found that, the see being vacant, the King received the harvests from the episcopal manors. So acute was his financial trouble, that he had to persuade the Bishop-designate of Worcester to pay the consecration expenses of both.†

Our Bishop figured prominently in State matters. Edward I had once sent him abroad on royal business,‡ and his successor

* *Register*, 216, 267, 324, 423, 424, 426; *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, LIV, 92.

† *Register*, xiv.

‡ *Register*, xviii.

frequently employed him at home and beyond the seas. It is somewhat curious to notice how closely synchronistic were the histories of Stapeldon and Edward II, the Bishop's term of office commencing but three months after and terminating three months before that of the King, and both dying by violence within a year of each other, though the former was twenty-four years senior to the latter. To that weak and unfortunate monarch he ever rendered wise and loyal service, attending him in Parliament and in Council; and he was valued and trusted by his master, who even commissioned him with two others to open Parliament at York in 1314 in his stead, and in 1320 appointed him High Treasurer of England.* It was a noble devotion, however unworthy was its object, for it was his whole-hearted support of the royal cause that brought the prelate to his cruel and ignominious death. The frequent summonses from the King and the attending to public business made such an extensive demand upon his time and attention, that he was necessarily much absent from his diocese: indeed, the last two years of his life were wholly occupied by his secular duties; and a careful study of his itinerary shows that he was away for nearly three quarters of his episcopate, his seventeen years of office giving an annual average of only fifteen weeks spent within his diocese. Episcopal assistance was difficult to obtain early in the fourteenth century; but in May 1324, having then been absent from his diocese for more than fourteen months, he was able to secure a month's help from Robert le Petit, who apparently had relations in Devon (a Sir Michael Petit and his family figure there a few years earlier), and had been deposed in 1322 after a two years' episcopate at Clonfert.†

However, during those rather brief spells that he spent in the west, the Diocesan accomplished a wonderful amount of Church work. He took great tours in his diocese, visiting even some of the very remote parishes in Devon, and once in two years spending some weeks in Cornwall. He made inspections of a number of his churches, giving orders for improvements or repairs—more light must be let in at Staver-

* *Register*, xix, xxiii.

† *Register*, 313, 384.

ton, at Ashburton the chancel windows ought to be made of stone instead of wood, a figure of the patron saint must be obtained for Axminster, Bishop's Tawton chancel was too narrow and dark and ruinous, Marwood was not big enough for the congregation and must be enlarged, Ilfracombe should be lengthened by 24 feet at least, and everywhere there must be provided a due supply of books and vestments and utensils. He held a formal Visitation of the Consistory Court, discovering many abuses and irregularities, which he ordered to be set right.* He obtained from the King the privilege of a weekly market and an annual fair for his manors of Ashburton, Cargoll, Chudleigh, Clyst (Sowton), Crediton, Lawhitton, Pawton, and St German's, and a fair for Penryn.†

But the most remarkable item of his diocesan work was his Ordinations with their marvellously great numbers of candidates. He ordained as many as 136 times—an average of eight times a year—though 78 of these were for "first tonsure" only, and such could be admitted with but little formality, the rite being occasionally ministered in the Chapter-house, or even in the hall or the living room of the Palace or of a manor-house. The Bishop was scrupulous about holding his chief Ordinations in the Ember Seasons, Saturday in Ember-week being the date chosen; and he arranged them in many different centres, in parish churches or Religious Houses or chapels on his manors, in order to suit the convenience of the candidates, or his own—as in the case of the 26 Ordinations held without the diocese, chiefly in his manorial chapels or in his London house. Only 13 times did he ordain in his Cathedral (thrice in the Lady Chapel), the candidates generally being many, and the day an Ember Saturday, though on five occasions Easter Eve was selected for the event.

His first Ordination constituted an extraordinary record. The see had been long vacant—it was fifteen months since Bishop Bytton had died, and we do not know the date of his last Ordination—and consequently the number of candidates

* *Register*, 34, 37, 378.

† *Register*, 372, 373.

was very great, so great that we should be inclined to question the accuracy of the returns, if it were not that the full list of names has been carefully preserved. At that period the Church of England had six Orders of ministers—bishops, priests, deacons, subdeacons, acolytes, and the "first-tonsured"; and on December 21st, 1308, Bishop Stapeldon in Crediton parish church ordained 1,005 persons—273 first-tonsured, 473 acolytes, 161 subdeacons, 81 deacons, and 17 priests. The examination of all these, which was delegated to the Bishop's Official and the several Archdeacons, must have proved a heavy task; and even more difficult must have been the entertaining of such a multitude in a little market town like Crediton, especially in midwinter.*

Another large ordination was that of December 22nd, 1313 (the Bishop had been absent from his diocese for fifteen months), when 336 were admitted to Orders in Totnes Priory; and on six other occasions the ordinands numbered upwards of 200. One of these was held in the Lady Chapel of the Cathedral, and we cannot help wondering how the 209 candidates were accommodated in so small a space, and whether they were marshalled in companies or in single file.† Statistics give the numbers (and the full names) of those ordained during this episcopate:—first-tonsured 2,456, acolytes 1,543, subdeacons 813, deacons 865, and priests 836: total 6,513. Thus the annual average was 465. An examination of the figures shows that of the first-tonsured more than one third never proceeded to any higher Order. Doubtless many of these were ordained merely in order to qualify for "benefit of clergy," and had no intention of acting as ministers; but even this admission to Orders was sufficient to make a man eligible for institution to a living, and those who saw no prospect of ever becoming priests might decide to rest content with the status of a beneficed clergyman. Similarly, nearly half of the acolytes went no further in the ministry, but subdeacons and deacons normally went on to higher Orders.

Further, those who belonged to the ranks of the clergy must have been very numerous in that period. The average

* *Register*, xiv, 446.

† *Register*, 463, 490.

annual number of those admitted to Orders (first tonsure) in the diocese was then 175, whereas in these times it is normally about 25 (deacons): and, if we reckon the respective populations of the two counties at 240,000 then and 1,000,000 now, we must infer that the clergy then were thirty times more numerous, in proportion to the population, than is the case now. This circumstance must have constituted a serious obstacle in the way of enforcing law and order; for all those clerics, by virtue of "benefit of clergy," were exempt from ordinary penalties, and, if condemned in a civil court, could only be handed over to the ecclesiastical powers for punishment, which would merely take the form of excommunication and confinement in the bishop's prison. In an age when crimes of violence and lawlessness were rife, this exemption involved grave dangers to the public safety and the keeping of the peace.

The Bishop's Register contains ample evidence of clerical disorders, both in its general references to clergymen imprisoned for murders, robberies, and felonies, and in the mention of specific instances. One was the case of eleven incumbents who burst open the door of St Buryan Church, which was a Royal Chapel and exempt from the Bishop's jurisdiction, and so violently assaulted the Dean and his attendants that the lives of some of them were despaired of. Another was that of a Canon of Exeter Cathedral, John Dyrewyn, who broke into the house of a citizen, by occupation a painter, and carried off goods to the value of £5 (£94). A third was that of the Rector of St Ive, who abducted the wife of John de Thorntone, and robbed him of some of his possessions, and refused to make amends. Then there were three priest vicars of Crediton, who were guilty of gross immorality; and the rectors of Broadwoodwidger and Tedburn St Mary, who trespassed after game at Okehampton, and beat and wounded some of Hugh de Courtenay's keepers. It is only too possible that such miscreants would gloat over the recollection—even if they did not remind the Bishop—of his Lordship's own escapade, when as a Canon of Exeter, and abetted by Subdean Uphavene and John de Wele, who was then Rector of Combe-in-Teignhead and afterwards

Precentor and Archdeacon of Exeter, he led a lawless rabble to attack the Dominican Convent at Exeter, breaking into the cloister and church, wounding some of the brethren, and, after doing damage in the holy place, carried off goods to the value of £20 (£377). It was, indeed, an amazing act of imprudence and wrong, and happily it stands as the sole aspersion against the character of this good and holy man.*

The Bishop seems to have striven earnestly to raise the standard of the clerical order, so that the Church in the diocese should be better manned; and to this end he aimed at fitting men for the priesthood by improving their intellectual attainments. He had no choice but to ordain and institute to benefices many who were only in Minor Orders—subdeacons, acolytes, and even first-tonsured—but he used his best endeavours to induce them to seek the priesthood. As a preliminary to that end he encouraged and extended the system of licences for absence in order to study, sending men to Oxford or elsewhere, and stipulating in many instances that the incumbent should qualify for subdeacon's Orders within a year. The effort seems to have been largely successful; but, though there was much to be said in favour of this system, the attendant disadvantage was a grave one, for there were probably not a few parishes that were left without a resident priest during the whole of Stapeldon's episcopate. Particularly hard was the lot of the church people of Exbourne, who had no rector for fifteen out of eighteen years, for one rector was absent for five years' study, his successor for six, and then a third rector for four. Similarly, after one rector of Bratton Fleming had been away for a year and a half, a second had leave for ten years and a half, during which he became a priest, and then a third became a subdeacon after one year's study. Blackawton's rector, a subdeacon, attained to the priesthood, but it meant his absence from his parish for ten years. The rector of Torrington likewise became a priest, being parted from his flock for nine years. Two successive rectors of Ashcombe, both subdeacons, were away for five and three years respectively. Such records abound in the Register, and one cannot resist the conviction that

* *Register*, ix, 320, 419, 425, 426, 438.

religion in those parishes must have sadly waned, when the benefice was put out to farm, or the spiritual ministrations were left to the spare time and convenience of a neighbouring priest.

Another useful scheme for the increase of clerical efficiency was the frequent appointing of a coadjutor, and that for a variety of reasons. William de Bisimano, Treasurer of the Cathedral, being unfitted by age and infirmities for fulfilling his high office, was to be represented by Hugh le Engleis, Rector of Talaton; and likewise the functions of Subdean John de Uphavene had to be delegated to others, as he was verging on imbecility. The Prior of Pilton was to be responsible for the duty at Ashford, Vicar Gilbert being too old for work. A deputy had to be obtained for the Prior of Otterton, who was aged, blind, and a confirmed invalid. Two coadjutors were found for Robert de Aspertone, Rector of St Mary Major's at Exeter, who was incapacitated by illness. The charge of Ashprington was committed to Walter Daumarle, Vicar of Totnes, because Rector Nicholas was illiterate and devoid of tact. And when the Bishop was expecting to be long absent from his diocese, he commissioned his Official Principal to appoint coadjutors, as need should require.*

Another evil, though apparently not a very common one, was absenteeism. Probably the case of Nicholas Lovetot was exceptional—he had not visited his church at Stokenham for three years, even his whereabouts being unknown; and consequently he was threatened with deprivation. But such neglect was less unusual with the heads of Religious Houses, to the Bishop's great grief; and peremptory orders had to be issued to the Priors of Totnes, Tywardreath, and Minster, urging them to return into residence instead of wandering far afield.†

As an assistance to the spiritual life of the clergy the Bishop was careful to appoint penitentiaries to hear the ordinary confessions of ecclesiastical persons, one for each rural deanery. As graduates they would all be men of

* *Register*, 35, 46, 108, 156, 390, 396.

† *Register*, 381, 390, 395, 396.

learning; and, most of them being incumbents of unimportant cures—even such remote places as Wydecombe-in-the-Moor and Trusham and Sydenham Damarel—they ought to have ample leisure for their special duties. Further, for the hearing of cases reserved, he nominated two special penitentiaries for each archdeaconry. Some years later, as the Penitentiary General of the diocese was overworked owing to the great number of penitents, and was too far away from Cornwall, he made choice of the Vicar of Liskeard to act as his assistant or deputy, with authority to hear confessions even of such greater sins as adultery and incest; though certain cases were still to be reserved for the Bishop's own treatment, among them being perjury for the purpose of preventing rights of inheritance or of impeding lawful marriages.*

From time to time the Bishop was called upon to arrange or to sanction the emoluments that were to be granted to the vicar of a parish, when the benefice was appropriated to a Religious House or to some other body. The technical name for such an ordinance was "taxatio vicariae," and that for Barnstaple is quite a typical one. There the impropriators, the Prior and monks of St Mary Magdalene's, were to erect at their own expense and on land belonging to them suitable buildings for the use of the vicar; which buildings he was to keep in repair together with all books, vestments, Church ornaments, and the windows of the chancel. He was to have all the small tithes (including the hay) of the parish, except those accruing from the monks' mills and their live stock and such animals as pasture on their land. He was to pay to the Priory £5 (£94) a year in quarterly instalments, and to be responsible for the usual ecclesiastical dues (the archdeacon's procurations, the cathedraticum, and the synodalia); but the monks were charged with any other fees and expenses connected with the church. Walkhampton is an instance of a country benefice, appropriated to the Abbey of Buckland Monachorum. The vicar was to enjoy the glebe with the house and buildings on it, except a portion adjoining the churchyard on the north, which the impropriators were to

* *Register*, 113-115.

have for erecting a barn to contain their great tithes. He was to receive the small tithes of the whole parish, including that of hay; but the manor of Gnatham, belonging to the Abbey, was to be exempt. He was to keep in good order the chancel windows and the Church books and to pay the usual ecclesiastical dues; but the Abbey was to be responsible for all other expenses, and was to grant him every Christmas an allowance of half a mark (£6).*

The achievement whereby Stapeldon's name specially lives, and will ever continue to live, is his great foundation at Oxford. As yet the collegiate system was only in its infancy, and students, who were mostly mere boys, were usually lodged in private houses in the town, with the natural consequence that discipline was slight or even non-existent, and moral evils were prevalent. One of the first establishments to gather these youths together, to share a common and disciplined life, was Stapeldon Hall, which looked on our Bishop as its founder. In truth he was only co-founder, and the first step was taken by his brother; but he soon became the chief partner, the benefactions were principally his, and he gave the College its statutes and became its first Visitor.

The initial endowment was an acre of land in the Manor of Draynec at Gwinear in Cornwall together with the advowson of that rectory. The transference to Sir Richard de Stapeldon was authorized by Gilbert de Clare, Earl of Gloucester and Hereford, who was chief Lord of that Manor; it was sanctioned by King Edward II with his royal licence for the maintenance of twelve poor scholars at Oxford; and it was effected by Sir Reginald de Bevile, owner of the Manor and patron of the living, who in 1312 conveyed the property to Sir Richard. He in turn conveyed it to the Dean and Chapter of Exeter in 1314, and that year is now recognised as the date of the foundation of the College.

The founders of Stapeldon Hall had sufficient precedents before them, even in their own land; for University and Balliol and Merton Colleges at Oxford and Peterhouse at Cambridge had already proved their worth, and none of them

* *Register*, 41, 399.

could then be described as new. Bishop Stapeldon imitated these models, but not closely, for in one important respect he was an innovator. University and Merton and Peterhouse were intended chiefly for the clerical order; but Stapeldon wished to encourage a wide education, and so, without neglecting religious influences, he founded a house of study rather than a house of religion; and unlike the others, even Balliol itself, he endowed the collegiate body with a full measure of self-government.*

The College was founded for thirteen students—or more, if circumstances should permit—the headship being entrusted to one of the thirteen, who was to be elected annually by his fellows, and bear the title of Rector. One of the number was to be in priest's Orders and was to study Theology and Canon Law, the others devoting themselves to Philosophy. That one, who was to act as Chaplain, was to be appointed by the Chapter of Exeter Cathedral, but vacancies among the twelve were to be filled by the other students. All were to come from the diocese of Exeter, eight of the twelve being Devonians and four Cornishmen; and they were to be chosen for their capacity, their good conduct, and their straitened circumstances, no consideration being allowed on the score of relationship, favour, affection, or fear. The time of residence was to extend over twelve or thirteen years, the degree of Bachelor of Arts being taken at the end of six years and that of Master after four more, and the remaining two or three years being devoted to lecturing. Four weeks in each year were allowed for vacation, it being enacted that if any student was longer absent, he should forfeit a proportionate part of his annual allowance. That allowance amounted to 10s. (£9), but double for the Rector and the Chaplain, and it was additional to the 10d. (16s.) a week for commons.†

The foundation was enlarged in after times, the first augmentation being accomplished by Bishop Stafford, who in 1414 established two additional studentships. At the same time, by means of a Papal Bull, he formally substituted

* *Exeter College*, Stride, 8; *Peterhouse*, T. A. Walker, 16.

† *Register*, xvii, 303; *Reg. Coll. Exon.*, vi; *Exeter College*, Stride, 11.

the name of his see for that of the founder, so that henceforth Stapeldon Hall, which had already for half a century been commonly called "Exeter Hall," was known as "Exeter College." But though the name of the originator of this most beneficent scheme is not now on the lips of every Oxonian, the close connection of Stapeldon's College and diocese still continues; for the Bishop of Exeter is *ex officio* the Visitor, and many of the *alumni* are drawn from Devon and Cornwall, partly owing to the encouragement offered in scholarships by west country schools.*

The good Bishop was an encourager of learning in other places also. In Exeter he had a scheme for starting a Grammar School in connection with St John's Hospital, but the accomplishment of that was uncompleted at the time of his death. At Ashburton, too, he made provision for a free school for children, assigning its conduct to the priest of St Lawrence's Chantry, which he founded and endowed in 1314. The Bishop was a generous benefactor of the town, making provision for a supply of good water and for the isolation of persons infected with plague; and the grateful Portreeve and burgesses bound themselves and their successors to keep the chapel and its contents in good order, and to see that the priest, whose appointment was to be in their hands, received his due emoluments. The existing Grammar School, which is proud of its episcopal founder and claims a continuous existence from that date, has utilized the ancient site, and has incorporated in its buildings the tower of the original chapel.†

A richness of apparatus was lavished by Stapeldon on his private chapel, as we know from an inventory—fully drawn up, but now defective because of the bad condition of the parchment—that was presented to the Primate by the Bishop's executors. Some items in the MS. are illegible, but the sum-total of the values mentioned amounts to £248 (£4,484). The most valuable article was a precious mitre (£173, *i.e.*, £3,128), and there is mention of a chasuble, worked with the arms of France and England, worth £5 6s. 8d. (£97), and at least seven other chasubles. There were also sets of

* *Reg. Coll. Exon.*, iii; *Exeter College*, Stride, 14, 27.

† *Register*, xv; Oliver's *Bishops*, 69.

dalmatics and tunicles, four copes, a wealth of stoles and albs and surplices and amices (one adorned with big pearls and valued at £1, *i.e.*, £18), five chalices and two pyxes, a reliquary worth 50s. (£45), and a censer costing £3 6s. 6d. (£60).*

The Bishop's library, comprising ninety-five volumes, valued at £190 (£3,436) was strictly, almost painfully, professional in character, consisting chiefly of many collections of Papal and Conciliar Decrees, together with a number of legal books, sermons, Holy Scriptures, commentaries, and Office Books. The classics, biographies, histories, travels, and all kinds of lighter literature were almost entirely unrepresented; so that we can hardly picture to ourselves his Lordship, having returned to his palace after a tiring Visitation tour, refreshing himself by taking down a book from his shelves; or sending in from his manor at Clyst for a few volumes to while away a winter's evening, when he felt poorly or out of heart. Indeed, the fact that he possessed several chess boards suggests that he had to seek for diversion from a different source; and maybe the mention of spectacles among his chattels indicates that reading would be no easy occupation for him.†

Among the Bishops of Exeter Stapeldon must be accorded high rank, not only for his work and achievements, but also for his personal character. Remarkable for his considerateness for others, and his kindly and gentle treatment of all men, he must have been lovable both as a prelate and as a man. His episcopate is noticeably free from the disputes and actions at law and the fulminating of excommunications, that were so common at that period. The bitter trial of the long time of waiting for his consecration, when the Primate treated him with arrogance and cruelty, called forth no corresponding recrimination, but a meek and Christ-like endurance; and even the venomous spite of Plympstoke was met merely by quiet remonstrance and generous attempts to bring him to reason. A natural concomitant of such a nature was a too ready credulity, which led him to accept people's statements and pretended miracles without sufficient

* *Register*, 562.

† *Register*, 563, 565.

circumspection and investigation; but there was a love of exactness in detail—perhaps merely prosaic, but more likely tinged with a spice of humour—which again and again found expression in his replies to Royal Letters of Enquiry that were guilty of inaccuracies. For instance, when proceedings were pending against William de Keynes, Rector of Brodewode (Broadwoodwidger), and Adam de Stapeldone, Rector of Tetteborne (Tedburn St Mary), and the King's writ asked for information concerning "Adam de Stapeldone, Rector of Tetteburi, and John de Keynes, Rector of Brodewode," the Bishop sent his return with the bald statement:—"There is no John de Keynes, Parson of Brodewode, in the Diocese, and no such Church as Tetteburi." And when a second writ was received and that too was found to be inaccurate, the return stated:—"There is no Adam de Stapeltone, Parson of Tutteburne, and no William de Caynes, Parson of Bodewode, in the Diocese."*

Other outstanding features, which were remarkable in Bishop Stapeldon, were his unswerving and loyal service to his unworthy monarch; his magnificent generosity to the cause of the Church, as evidenced especially in the rich and lavish adornment of the Cathedral; and his assiduous and whole-hearted devotion to the various duties of his office, his absenteeism from his diocese being at least partly condoned by the conditions of his position and the customs of the time.

Stapeldon was the one Bishop of Exeter who met with a violent end, and his death was due to his high sense of duty and to his obedience to conscience in his service of his King. The weakness of Edward II as a ruler and the selfish arrogance and mismanagement of the Despencers so effectually disgusted the people of England, that the unfaithful Queen Isabella and her friend Roger Mortimer achieved an easy conquest, when they landed at Orwell in Suffolk in September 1326. The custody of the city of London had been committed to the Lord Mayor and to Stapeldon jointly; and the latter, though no longer Treasurer, still suffered from the odium attaching to high officers of State

* *Register*, II, 15, 126, 440.

in that unpopular reign. The elder Despencer was hanged at Bristol and his son at Hereford, but first came the Bishop's execution by mob law. An assault was made on his London house, and, having set fire to the door, the rabble broke in, and, not finding the Bishop, looted his goods. Meanwhile he happened to return from the country, accompanied on horseback by his nephew William Walle and John Padington his valet. He had nearly reached the north door of St Paul's, when he was dragged off his horse, and taken to Cheapside, where he was proclaimed to be a traitor to the State, a seducer of the King, and a destroyer of the liberties of the City. He was then stripped of his armour and garments, and barbarously beheaded, his two companions sharing his fate. His head was fixed on a pole, and his bare corpse cast into a hole in a piece of waste land without the performance of any religious rites. This occurred on October 15th, 1326, and some weeks later his body was interred in St Clement Danes Church, close to his London house; whence again it was removed to be laid to rest on March 28th, 1327, in his Cathedral at Exeter.*

A few years previously he had made provision for a mass in the Charnel Chapel in the Close, to be offered daily for himself in life or in death; and also for the solemn observation of his obit in the Cathedral, for which the royal sanction was obtained. To this he added in Crediton Church the annual observation during his lifetime of his birthday, and afterwards of the anniversary of his death; and he founded also a daily Mass for himself and all other Bishops of Exeter in the Church of St Clement Danes in London.†

The actual will of Bishop Stapeldon has not come down to us; but the executors were not able to complete their task till A.D. 1338, and fortunately the details of their disbursements during the last seven years are extant. The bulk of the legacies would doubtless have been settled long before that, but there is much information to be gathered from the executors' inventory. The list of silver goods enumerated therein is lengthy indeed, and the ready money in the house amounted to the immense sum of about £3,000

* *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, LIV, 93.

† *Register*, 374, 377; Grandisson's *Register*, 752.

(£54,247), and the animals on his twenty-eight manors numbered nearly 8,000 (112 horses, 868 cattle, 6,705 sheep, and 273 pigs).

From even this fragment of his will, comparatively unimportant as it was, some interesting facts may be gleaned. One remarkable feature was the encouragement given to young students, as many as thirty-three scholars (about half of whom are described as " poor scholars ") receiving legacies varying from £1 (£18) to 3s., and a further grant of £20 (£362) being made to James de Moleton, a nephew of the Bishop. Legacies were left to several churches, chiefly for restoration purposes, Religious Houses being treated more generously than parish churches, except that £5 (£90) went to Salcombe Regis. Thus Launceston Priory got £10 (£181), Athelney Abbey £6 (£105), and Pilton Priory £3 6s. 8d. (£60); while sums ranging from 23s. (£21) to 1s. 10d. (33s.) were left to Broadhembury, St Mary Magdalene's at Exeter, Frithelstock, Pilton, Plymtree, and St Winnow. He figures as a public benefactor by bequeathing money for the upkeep or repair of bridges, being most generous to Cowley (£6 11s. 0d., *i.e.*, £118), and Stoke Canon (£4, *i.e.*, £72) near his city, and to Barnstaple (£4) and New Bridge (£3), both of which were close by his manor at Bishop's Tawton. Others that benefited were those at Ashwater, Axminster, Bickleigh near Tiverton, Bideford, Bovey Heath, Broadhembury, Coleridge, Fenbridge at Kenton, and Modbury. Among noteworthy items must be mentioned his wide recognition of the claims of kinship, many relations being remembered in his will, some of whom were quite poor; and also the occasions, not a few, on which he made provision for the marriage expenses of a young lady, who for any reason might have a claim on his liberality.*

It remains to give some account of his work on the Cathedral. Stapeldon is chiefly memorable for the beauty and costliness of the furniture of the sanctuary and choir, on which he lavished throughout most of his episcopate an annual outlay of about £250 (*i.e.*, £4,648 in modern value). Half of this he contributed out of his own purse, and to help

* *Register*, 568-579.

in raising the remainder he ordered a general collection throughout his diocese in 1310.* There is mention of a heavy rate being levied on the Cathedral dignitaries, varying from £6 7s. 4d. (£121) from the Dean to £1 18s. (£35) from the Chancellor, and a tax was imposed also on all the clergy of the diocese.† To this prelate is ascribed the removal eastwards to their present position of the choir seats, which till his time extended across the transepts into the nave, and the fitting of the stalls with carved wooden canopies. Those canopies have long since disappeared, but their modern successors are probably very good representatives of the old work. The bishop's throne, too, still existing—the noblest in England, perhaps the noblest in Christendom—owes its being to him, and dates from 1316.‡

But his greatest and costliest undertaking was the new high altar and reredos. Of this *chef d'oeuvre* we have no exact description, and with the exception of a few miscellaneous fragments it has altogether perished. But we know that about five years were occupied in its erection (1317–1322), and, if we may judge from the entries in the Fabric Rolls, it must have been exceedingly elaborate and ornate. A considerable quantity of stone was employed, with iron bars to hold the structure together; and we have mention of tabernacle work and stone bosses over the altar; and fifty-four small columns with capitals, as well as a number of statuettes. Great store of gold and paint was expended in colouring it (*e.g.*, in 1321 one item is the purchase of as much as six pounds of gold-leaf), and the whole was surmounted by an image of the Saviour. The reredos alone is said to have cost nearly £6,000 of our present money, and the altar, with the exception of its marble slab, was of silver.

The *entourage* of the altar on the south was beautified by the addition of the triple sedilia carved in stone, a work of marvellous elegance and lightness, finished in 1319, which, though mutilated, fortunately escaped falling a victim to Protestant "axes and hammers."

† Oliver's *Bishops*, 381.
* Bishop Lyttleton's *Account of Exeter Cathedral*, 7.
‡ *Fabric Rolls*.

Yet another of the principal internal fittings was the creation of the same bishop's ingenuity and munificence, namely, the chancel-screen, or, as it is termed in the Fabric Rolls, "la pulpytte." This is supported on a triple arcade crossing the entrance of the choir, and, though in itself a thing of beauty and admirable as a work of art, it unhappily acts as a barrier, which in great measure divides the Cathedral into two parts, and makes it unsuitable for great congregations. Doubtless, however, this inconvenience was not so apparent in early times as it is now, when a large organ partially blocks the choir archway, and seems to dwarf and crush the screen with its superincumbent mass.

The choir was thus fitly furnished with all structural requisites for the performance of divine service in its full and stately magnificence. High altar and reredos, sedilia, bishop's throne, stalls, chancel-screen with loft for the musicians, and above it on an iron beam a great carved rood—all were evidences of the devotion and lavish generosity of Bishop Stapeldon. But they were not the only evidences; for the transeptal chapel of St Andrew was completed by him, and the cloisters were commenced in his time. Therefore he might almost be regarded as a second founder, and so his tomb was accorded the position of honour that is usually occupied by the founder, *viz.*, on the north side of the high altar. There, over his poor mangled body, is set his carved effigy, representing the Bishop in full pontificals, gazing up into the face of the bleeding Saviour, whose painted portrait looks lovingly down on him from the roof of the flat canopy above his sepulchre.

The diocese was exceptionally unfortunate, just at the time when the realm of England was troubled by the evil occurrences connected with the deposition and death of King Edward II and the change of government. The unlooked-for murder of Bishop Stapeldon was in itself a terrible calamity; and when, after an interregnum of five months, the Church in the west secured a new diocesan, he survived his consecration for only three months, so that all was thrown into confusion, before order had yet been restored. Furthermore, the Cathedral lost its chief ruler, Bartholomew de

St Lawrence dying six weeks after the murder of the head of the diocese ; so that in writing to the Primate the bereaved canons—in their sorrow jumbling their metaphors—described themselves, or rather their church, as being not only widowed, but also doubly orphaned.* The aforesaid Dean de St Lawrence had found the way to his office a precarious one indeed. On the decease of his predecessor Thomas de Lecchelade in 1309, the votes of the canons had been equally divided between John de Brueton and Roger de Ottery, both of them members of the Chapter, who magnanimously ensued peace by both withdrawing their names as candidates. Thereupon William de Kyngescote was elected by a majority, but was disqualified, owing to some canonical informality, by Bishop Stapeldon, who then collated de St Lawrence to the deanship. Kyngescote, however, appealed to the Archbishop ; who was about to investigate the case, when the proceedings were rendered unnecessary by the death of the appellant. The Primate and the Diocesan then came to an agreement, and Bartholomew de St Lawrence was confirmed as Dean in June 1311 after a vacancy of considerably more than two years. It is not surprising, then, that the canons should petition the Archbishop to facilitate as much as possible the appointment of St Lawrence's successor, that they might not be burdened by heavy expenses and trouble. Probably the election of Richard de Coletone took a normal course, but documentary evidence is not forthcoming. Before the deanery had thus been filled, Archbishop Reynolds had appointed an administrator to carry on the business of the see vacated by Stapeldon. For this task he made choice of one of the Exeter canons, Adam de Murimouth, senior, who, besides holding a stall in Hereford Cathedral and the rectory of Cliffe in the diocese of Rochester, was a man of fame as a historian, his *Chronicle* being a work of real importance.

For some considerable while the system of Papal Provisions had been invading the liberties of the English Church. The abuse became prominent in the early days of the reign of Henry III, first as a command from the Pope that certain of his friends in Italy should be provided with benefices in

* Berkeley's *Register*, 4.

public patronage, and then as an encroachment on the rights of private patrons too. When Edward II became king, it was a common occurrence for dignified and honourable posts to be thus reserved for foreign ecclesiastics, who received the emoluments and either neglected the duties or arranged for their performance by deputies; and before the middle of that reign the Pope began to provide occupants even for English bishoprics. John XXII attempted to do so in the case of this see after Stapeldon's death, announcing that he had reserved to himself the right of appointing to Exeter. When, however, he learned that the Chapter had, in pursuance of their established custom, applied for and obtained the *congé d'élire*, and had canonically elected their chosen candidate, and had also obtained the Royal Assent, he raised no opposition; not however waiving his claim to exercise a right of provision, but conferring his choice on the bishop-elect.

The man so appointed was James de Berkeley, a Canon of Exeter, and also—shocking instance of pluralism—Archdeacon of Huntingdon, and Canon of Wells, Hereford, St David's, Chichester, and Bosham, and one of the Pope's chaplains. By birth he was closely allied with the aristocracy, his father being Thomas, Lord Berkeley, and his mother a daughter of William de Ferrers, Earl of Derby. His consecration was expedited much more than was sometimes the case, taking place in Canterbury Cathedral on March 22nd, 1327, only three months and a half after his election; but his brief episcopate is historically almost a blank, there being no records of the time preserved at Exeter, and even his benefaction to the Cathedral of a set of green-lined purple vestments adorned with pearls belonged to the early days of his canonry (1307). Death overtook him on June 24th while on a visit to Peterhayes, an episcopal manor in the parish of Yarcombe, on the north-east border of his diocese; and his body was interred on the south side of the choir of the Cathedral, though the only memorial of him now visible is his coat-of-arms (gules, a chevron between ten crosses patée, argent) in the great east window over the high altar.*

* Oliver's *Bishops*, 70; H. Reynolds, 99.

CHAPTER IX.

BISHOP GRANDISSON

THE stateliness and the commanding position of the massive and ancient four-towered Grandson Castle, still intact near the western shores of Lake Neuchatel, eloquently testify to the importance of the princely and episcopal family of de Grandissono or Grandisson. Its owners were Lords of Grandisson and Serrate in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, among them being William de Grandisson, who settled in Herefordshire and was summoned to the English Parliament as a Baron by Edward I and Edward II. He married Sibilla, a daughter and co-heiress of John, Baron Tregoz, of the same county ; and their second son was John, who, while Bishop of Exeter, succeeded to the family honours on the death of his eldest brother Peter in 1358, but relinquished his right to all the landed estates except some small properties inherited from his mother. His family provided the Church with a number of bishops—two uncles held the see of Verdun ; two others of earlier generations had been Bishops of Lausanne and one of Geneva ; and cousins or nephews were consecrated before him, and ruled at Toul and Basel and Lausanne.

His special preparation for his high office was obtained at the University of Paris, where he studied theology under James Fournier, who afterwards succeeded to the papal throne as Benedict XI (1334–1342) ; and his clerical career began at an early age, for he was only seventeen when he became a Prebendary of York—later he occupied a similar position at Lincoln—and at eighteen he was appointed by his Archbishop to be Archdeacon of Nottingham, an office which he held till his elevation to the episcopate. Furthermore Pope John XXII (1316–1334) honoured him by making him one of his Chaplains, and had him in residence with him

at Avignon for a while, his patronage and friendship standing Grandisson in good stead in after years.

This Pope had already appointed by provision as many as ten bishops to English sees, and now on the death of Bishop Berkeley he proceeded to fill Exeter by providing John de Grandisson.* The Dean and Chapter had already elected John de Godeleghe, one of their own body and Dean of Wells, but their action was disregarded. Of course this was a flagrant instance of interference with ancient and canonical rights; but in this case the diocese was the gainer, for the capitular choice was a most unwise one, as Godeleghe was aged and infirm, and died early in 1333.† The consecration ceremony was performed at Avignon by the Cardinal Bishop of Praeneste (October 18th, 1327), Grandisson being then thirty-five years of age; but he did not reach his diocese till the following June, by which time the see had been vacant very nearly twelve months, and even then his enthronization was deferred till August 22nd. The episcopate of Berkeley had been too brief to enable the diocese to recover from the disaster suffered by the assassination of Stapeldon, and consequently the Church's organization and influence were at a low ebb, and the episcopal estates were in a badly neglected state. Grandisson, however, was a man who was endowed with remarkable energy, strength, and ability; and, though local circumstances and the conditions of the fourteenth century confronted him with many and serious difficulties, his devoted and self-sacrificing work for the Church was successful; so that, even if the evils could not all be cured, his vigorous rule still availed to curb them.

It was quite evident that the diocese needed a resident bishop, and the new Diocesan was impressed by the harm caused through the absenteeism of Stapeldon, especially during his latter years. This he was determined to amend, and, as far as can be ascertained (and the records are fairly complete), he was away from his diocese only twenty times during the forty-one years that elapsed between his entry and his death, the average length of his absences being less

* A. H. Hore, 181.

† *Register*, xiii, 33.

than three weeks per annum. One of these involved a long journey to the papal court at Avignon, and the others were chiefly occupied by attendance at Parliaments or Provincial Councils, or by business visits to his episcopal manors at Chidham and Horsley in Surrey and Faringdon in Hampshire, or to his Collegiate Church of Bosham, near the last named place. Once, indeed, he spent a few days at his birthplace—Ashperton in Herefordshire; and twice filial affection drew him to his father's house at Oxenhall in Gloucestershire. But the bulk of his time was spent at Chudleigh (his usual place of residence), or at Clyst (Sowton), or (on short visits) at Exeter; and much attention was bestowed, at least in his earlier years, on extensive Visitation tours throughout his great diocese. For this work he occasionally availed himself of the assistance of a brother-bishop—Richard Francis, the newly appointed Bishop of Waterford (1338 and 1339); Richard Fitz-Ralph, who with all pomp and ceremony was consecrated as Archbishop of Armagh by Grandisson himself in Exeter Cathedral on July 8th, 1347, and afterwards traversed nearly the whole diocese, performing divers episcopal functions; and John Ware, "Cumanagiensis Episcopus," who received several commissions between 1355 and 1361.*

One of Grandisson's chief cares and ambitions—that indeed which more than all has made him famous—was the completing of the work of rebuilding the Cathedral, an undertaking that had been about half finished by his predecessors, as he informed Pope John XXII in a letter written about 1329. Bronescombe, Quivel, Bytton, and Stapeldon had steadily pushed on the building and reconstruction of the eastern part of the fabric, the special achievement of the last named prelate being the furnishing and beautifying of the presbytery and choir; so that to Grandisson fell the happy duty of consecrating the high altar on December 18th, 1328, dedicating it in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Apostles St Peter and St Paul.† Stapeldon had also completed the transforming of the easternmost bay of the nave, whose

* *Register*, 888, 891, 898, 1022, 1023, 1175, 1213, 1225.

† *Register*, 97, 434.

windows as well as those of St Edmund's Chapel were newly glazed in 1318 or 1319, so that it is evident that the designing or at least the commencing of the present nave must be placed to his credit.* He had made preparation for completing it, and shortly before the end of his life he had laid in a great store of materials, besides making a special donation of 1,000 marks (£12,055). All then was in train for Grandisson, who augmented the money in hand by a gift of £60 (£1,085), and set forward the work as soon as possible. Of the fourteen pillars and two half-pillars of the nave four were already in place, as well as ten of the seventy small ones of the clerestory; and in 1333 the Dean and Chapter settled their account for the others with William Canon of Corfe for marble supplied by his father and himself, the large ones costing £10 10s. 0d. (£190) each and the small 5s. 0d. (£4 10s. 0d.). The bulk of the money had been paid in 1329, so that we may reckon the latter year as marking the commencement of the new Bishop's special effort.†

Save for the eastern extremity, the Norman fabric of the nave, it would seem, was still standing, and it was found possible to adapt the main part of the external walls to the novel style. The new arches, however, were wider than the old, the distance from centre to centre of adjoining pillars being 18ft. 6in.; so the ancient responds had to be hacked away—their position can still be traced on the interior face of the wall of the south aisle, as well as the corresponding Norman buttresses without. Grandisson followed fairly faithfully the lines of the work that had been already done, though there are minor details that differentiate his execution from his predecessor's, *e.g.*, his piers are set on higher bases, the moulding of their capitals is slightly more developed, his bosses are flatter, and his flying buttresses are simpler in design.

The Bishop made it his special care to prepare for himself a burial-place in the thickness of the wall on the south side of the main entrance. His shrine now bears the name of the Chapel of St Radegund; but this designation cannot be

* *Fabric Rolls.*

† *Fabric Rolls; Archit. Hist. of Ex. Cath., 72, 135.*

traced further back than the time of Dr Oliver, who merely suggested the identification as probable; and the site of the ancient chapel that bore that dedication has now been identified as outside the palace grounds near Palace Gate. In olden times his chapel was known as the Grandisson Chantry. He completed his work by adorning the west front with a beautiful stone screen or iconostasis, which stretches right across the end of the nave and aisles, and rises higher than the bottom of the great west window. It contains in two tiers 66 statues, of which the central ones of the lower row are believed to have been erected by Grandisson, the others being added by Bishop Brantyngham.

The date of the consummation of this great scheme is not known, but it is probable that it was in or about the year 1345, and that, the new high altar having been previously consecrated, no second consecration ceremony would be considered necessary on the completion of the rebuilding of the nave. It appears, then, that the present Cathedral occupied about 75 years in its construction, the work being carried on fairly continuously during that time; and as the average annual expenditure was about £200, the total cost would be £15,000, or approximately £300,000 in modern (pre-war) computation.

Two other undertakings in connection with the Cathedral are to be attributed to Grandisson. It was natural that when he transformed the wall of the south aisle he should be responsible, too, for the north ambulatory of the cloisters. Also in 1353 he inserted in the north clerestory of the nave, over the third archway from the east, the beautiful Minstrels' Gallery, whose slightly projecting front bears airy stone figures of fourteen winged musicians, playing on divers kinds of instruments.

So far as we know, the Cathedral body with all unanimity collaborated with the Bishop in the rebuilding scheme; but in other concerns there was sorry disagreement. In the first place, he found all the four Deans, who held office during his episcopate, to be thoroughly unsatisfactory. The first, Richard de Coletone (1327–1335), he excommunicated because of his contumacy, for he disputed his bishop's jurisdiction

and refused to appear when cited; and though this extreme measure brought about a speedy submission, the ban was very soon repeated, his revenues sequestrated, and his patronage put in commission. The Dean appealed to the Official of Canterbury, the primacy being vacant at the time; and as that magnate was not sufficiently powerful to clear him, he went in person to Avignon to lay his case before the Pope. There, however, he met with no encouragement; and after more than a year's absence he had to acknowledge defeat and turn his face homewards, but he died on the way. His successor, Richard de Brayleghe (1335–1353) signally failed, as Coletone had failed too, to restrain the irregularities, and even the flagrant peculations, of his staff. Nor was Reginald de Buggewille (1353–1365) more successful, and he incurred the episcopal wrath for his slackness and want of straightforwardness, which had served to augment existing abuses. As for Robert Sumpter, he was suspected of being a married man, and therefore not canonically ordained; but, when summoned to answer before the Bishop, he refused to attend, and became an absentee, residing in the diocese of London.

With a succession of such Deans as these, it is not surprising to learn that among their subordinates discipline was in a bad state; but even so, we should scarcely be prepared for the shocking abuses that are revealed in the pages of the Episcopal Register. Again and again the Bishop had to complain of scandalous neglect of residence on the part of some of the canons, who, instead of devoting themselves to their duties in the Cathedral, indulged in hunting and hawking, and, when they were present at the services, were wont to engage in conversation, and leave before the end. They also misappropriated the revenues of the capitular estates and of the benefices that they held in plurality, spending the money on themselves and thus defrauding others; so that an investigation in 1351 brought to light the fact that the large sum of £365 (£6,257) was owing by five members, one of them being the Precentor.

But most astonishing was the misconduct of the choral vicars and other ministers of lower degree. Not only were

they also neglectful of the rule of residence, but some of them, "to God's dishonour and to their own damnation," seriously interfered with the services and brought scandal on the Cathedral by disorderly behaviour, even giggling and laughing during the performance of public worship—a shameful and horrible proceeding. With their minds elsewhere, they would scramble through the offices, and audibly call upon the officiant to hurry up. Frequently they muddled up the variants in the services, some taking one antiphon or response, and some another, and then disputed and quarrelled about them; and, when any of the less educated made mistakes in reciting the Latin forms, as not seldom happened, with loud voice they shouted their correction in the mother-tongue. They even acted like naughty schoolboys, those placed in the upper rows in the choir making fun of those below them by pouring down on their heads candle-grease from the tapers that they held in their hands at Mattins. Particular mention is made of unseemly merriment and obscene gestures indulged in before the congregation on the Festival of the Holy Innocents, which brought disgrace on "the cloth"; and though the Bishop, with his strict views as to discipline and his high sense of decorum, strove hard to stop these irreverences and irregularities, his efforts were only partially successful. Indeed, in his latter years he still had to complain of objectionable plays being acted by some of the ministers and boys, which were carried on during the daily offices and even during the solemnities of the Mass, the consequent noise and laughter proving a serious interference in the way of worship. What was true of the Cathedral was also the case in the Collegiate Churches of Crediton, Ottery St Mary, and Glasney, and the authorities of those places were peremptorily ordered to end the abuse.

The relations of Grandisson with his Archbishops were generally of an unhappy character. This was due partly to the circumstances of his appointment to Exeter; for, being provided by the Pope, and enjoying the special favour of at least one of the occupants of the papal throne, he figured as one who was peculiarly protected by the foreign power, and a person with whom it was dangerous to interfere. But

a more fruitful cause was the Bishop's own personality and disposition, inasmuch as he would not brook the intrusion of any outside authority in his diocese, and, strong man that he was and felt himself to be, was not ready to do the bidding or even to grant the requests of Canterbury. Furthermore, he was not a man to couch a refusal in complaisant terms, and on occasion he expressed his ruffled feelings in astonishingly and even shockingly strong language.

Archbishop Reynolds died only a month after Grandisson's consecration, and the Bishop's dealings with him were limited to a fitting letter announcing his promotion by the Pope with the unanimous consent of all the Cardinals, together with a petition that he would commit the temporary management of his see to his three Proctors and Vicars General. During the interregnum Grandisson presented himself in Canterbury Cathedral, and before the high altar bound himself by oath to render due and canonical obedience, respect, and submission to the Prior and Chapter of the Metropolitical Church and afterwards to the future Archbishop and his successors, saving his Order and the rights and dignities of his Cathedral at Exeter, and saving too his profession to the Apostolic See at the Court of Rome. We are bound to acknowledge that the two concluding provisos—especially the former—were allowed to influence his conduct as a Bishop in a fuller degree than his promise to his immediate ecclesiastical superior.*

The correspondence that passed between our Bishop and Simon de Meopham during the five years' primacy of the latter is not of a pleasing tenour, not does it enhance Grandisson's reputation. He is ever ready to hint at resorting to an appeal to Rome, if the Archbishop should fail to give him satisfaction ; and in one famous crisis, instead of hinting or threatening, he adopted the most drastic action. Again, the several apologies for non-attendance at Councils or Convocations lay themselves open to the interpretation of unwillingness, though veiled under the protestation of inability. One of these occasions occurred in January 1329, when a Provincial Synod was held in London. Grandisson excused

* *Register*, 157, 332.

himself on the pretext—elaborated at great length—that the visit would be fraught with peril to him; for, when Bishop Stapeldon had been slain, two years and a quarter earlier, the authorities had been unable to curb the outbreak of mob law, nor had the murderers ever been discovered and punished. Furthermore, the Pope was believed to have committed the investigation of the crime to some bishop, and men might reasonably imagine that he was that bishop, and would consequently be incensed against him. Moreover his London house was still unrestored, after being broken into and sacked by the rioters, so that it was not fit for occupation; and he would, he protested, be safer spending the night in a lonely forest.* It seems that Grandisson's sensibility had been wounded, because the Archbishop had written to certain persons in the Exeter diocese announcing his own enthronization, but had omitted to notify the Diocesan; and had also sent letters to the inmates of Polslo Priory, which were calculated to cause mischief, though he does not reveal to us so much as their subject. The Bishop therefore was not disposed to cherish a friendly spirit towards his Metropolitan. Apparently with such grievances in mind, Grandisson penned a cryptic and nastily opprobrious letter—accepted by his biographers as having been addressed to the Archbishop, and described by Prebendary Hingeston-Randolph as a "tremendous castigation"—in which he venomously abuses his unnamed correspondent for having secretly and maliciously plotted against him, and threatens revenge, to be obtained from the Pope, if other means fail.†

However, a couple of years later, when his Grace was engaged in conducting a Visitation of the southern diocese of his province, Grandisson wrote to him in quite decorous language, asking that he would do nothing to derogate from the long-existing rights of the See of Exeter in the Royal Chapel of Bosham, situated within the diocese of Chichester. There had, he said, been long and expensive suits between Bishop Stapeldon and the Bishop of Chichester, and, though

* *Register*, 138, 140-2, 196, 245, 256, 261, 446, 563; *Concilia*, Wilkins, II, 549, 551.

† *Register*, 195.

the dispute had now for long been allowed to drop, he intended to bring up the matter shortly in London in order to obtain a final settlement of their rival claims.*

Meopham, though not a prelate of eminence or special ability, was a conscientious worker for Church reform, and—there having been no Archiepiscopal Visitation for half a century—was determined to do his best to set matters in order in the various dioceses of his province. Rochester, Chichester, Salisbury in turn felt the weight of his authority, especially the first, whose Bishop was severely censured; and Christmastide of the year 1331 found him similarly engaged in the diocese of Bath, where he published his intention of proceeding next to Exeter. Grandisson was at Avignon—his sole visit to the Papal Court during his episcopate—and he succeeded in obtaining from his old patron and friend John XXII a Writ of Exemption (dated December 20th, 1331), which to the fullest extent safeguarded him from any molestation from his Archbishop. Its purview was extraordinarily wide, for it exempted from the power of Canterbury the Bishop and his Officials, so that Meopham could neither excommunicate nor suspend; nor could he interdict Grandisson or his Cathedral or his chapels, nor sequestrate the possessions of him or his Officials anywhere within the Province of Canterbury; and furthermore Grandisson was released from his oath of canonical obedience to his superior.

On his return to England, Grandisson appealed to the Pope against the projected Visitation, and persuaded the King and the Queen to petition his Holiness for his defence; as a consequence of which there was granted a second Writ of Exemption (May 30th, 1332), very similar to the former one. Meanwhile, the Archbishop had dispatched to the Dean of Exeter his official notification, with instructions to make it known. But the Bishop (on May 25th) issued his monition, strictly enjoining the Dean, under pain of the greater excommunication, to refrain from publishing it in the Cathedral, the city, or the diocese. He supported his action by the argument that his appeal was before the Pope; and, though

* *Register*, 254.

he cannot say that a ruling had been given in his favour, he contended that the Archbishop was guilty of disloyalty to his Holiness in persisting in his course while the matter was *sub judice.* Nothing daunted, however, Meopham arrived in the city on June 1st; but his attempt to reach the Cathedral was frustrated, for a body of armed men—doubtless organized by the Bishop, who had removed from his manor at Sowton to spend two or three weeks in his palace—barred his approach, so that he failed even to effect an entry into the Close. A few days later the Mayor received a stiff letter from his Lordship, complaining that, whether intentionally or not, the civil authorities had allowed some of the Archbishop's armed retainers to penetrate to the door of the Chapter-house, and tear down the copy of the Bishop's appeal that had been thereto affixed.

Further action was taken at Avignon, when these doings were reported there, for Commissions were issued to the Bishop of Winchester, the Abbot of St Augustine's at Canterbury, and the Papal Nuncio, Icherius de Concoreto, who were to serve on the Archbishop a citation to appear before the Roman Court in sixty days to answer for his molestations of the Bishop. It is to the credit of the first two that they took no active share in the proceedings; but the Primate had to suffer the indignity of having the citation served on him in his manor at Mortlake on October 9th by the Nuncio, though he seems to have disregarded the summons. He laid the case before a Provincial Council in London, but no agreement could be arrived at, and the matter had to be dropped.*

During this time an acrimonious dispute had for some years been carried on concerning Sir John Dynham of Woodbury, who in 1328 had been excommunicated by Grandisson, because he had deserted his wife, and disinherited his children, and was living in adultery with a cousin. Evidently the culprit had friends in high quarters, for when Thomas Hereward, Archdeacon of Exeter, was ordered to publish the sentence in the Cathedral and in all the churches of his archdeaconry,

* *Register*, 138, 140-2, 262, 653, 1,540; vol. III, xxxii, lxxix; *Concilia*, Wilkins, II, 559; G. G. Perry, I, 400, 402.

he failed to do so, although he incurred thereby the ban of the greater excommunication and suspension from office and sequestration of his emoluments, until he humbly submitted himself to his diocesan. The Archbishop, too, seems to have sympathized with Sir John, who even succeeded in obtaining a Royal Letter in his favour as well as a prohibition from Canterbury against Grandisson. The Bishop therefore wrote to the Primate, humbly petitioning him to revoke his writ, and threatening to appeal to a higher power; and, when his petition produced no effect, he penned a strongly worded protest. Meanwhile Dynham, who had formally carried his case to the Archbishop's Court, submitted himself to his Grace, being ready to accept his ruling; and, notwithstanding the diligent efforts of Grandisson, who wrote to several influential officials in various parts, begging them to support him in his suit against "adversarius noster," Meopham declared himself ready to absolve the penitent at Bath in September, 1331, though he invited the Bishop to send a representative to share in the proceedings. This was a sore defeat for Grandisson, who was evidently not satisfied with Dynham's confession, and declared that he had hoodwinked the Archbishop. But nothing more could be done, beyond an offer to confer on the matter, and disappointed remonstrances, with renewed hints as to the possibility of carrying the case further, if the Archbishop persisted in posing as an opponent instead of a supporter. Sir John did not long survive, for his will was administered in the summer of 1333.*

With Meopham's successor, John de Stratford (1333–1348), relations were scarcely less unhappy, though the grounds of contention were not so important. Trouble arose over Walter de Meriet, who at the opening of the episcopate was Chancellor of Exeter Cathedral and was shortly afterwards appointed Canon and Prebendary, but who was so neglectful of his duties that the benefice of St Newlyn (appropriated to the chancellorship) was sequestrated in 1332. Two years later the Archbishop wrote quite courteously, requesting that the sequestration might now be

* *Register*, 225, 227, 234, 261.

relaxed, Meriet being an old friend of his. He feels sure that it was imposed under a misapprehension, and begs that it may be removed until he and the Bishop are able to confer together, when, he is confident, he will be able to satisfy him. To this Grandisson replied that the penalty was rightly and necessarily inflicted, and that he is ready to send him written proof, if he desires. This drew from Stratford a rather severe indictment of the Bishop. He frankly allowed that his Papal Writ of Exemption granted him freedom from the authority of the Court of Canterbury in some respects, but not in others; and in these latter, even from the time of Meopham, he had been refusing obedience, and had encouraged his people to disobey likewise. Meriet lodged an appeal with the Archbishop, and the sequestration was withdrawn; but words of bitter remonstrance were written by Grandisson, whose line of action was justified by later events, for Meriet scandalously neglected his canonical duty of residence, and allowed his buildings at St Newlyn and Stoke Gabriel to go to ruin.

Another source of ill feeling was the case of Adam de Murimouth, senior, Precentor and Canon of the Cathedral. The Archbishop requested Grandisson to dispense him from residence, as he wished to appoint him Official of the Court of Canterbury. He wrote in 1334, reminding the Bishop that he had verbally consented, when asked at York; so now he makes his formal request, and begs that he will obtain the consent of his Chapter. Grandisson did not deny the statement as to his promise, but, very reasonably, pointed out that there were grave objections in the way; for the statutes of previous Bishops were particular as to residence, and it was a matter that closely concerned the welfare of the Cathedral and the work of the Chapter. Afterwards he wrote again, saying that he had discussed the topic with his Chapter, and they were both of opinion that there was not sufficient cause for granting the desired permission, and that surely there must be plenty of others in the Province competent for the post.

A year later (1335) another grievance comes to the fore. Grandisson wrote to the Primate to say that he was pained

to learn that he had regarded as excommunicate, and therefore requiring absolution, those who had supported their Bishop in his strife with Meopham; but in reply the Archbishop gently explained that certain persons of their own free will, without being cited, had come to him and confessed their wrongdoing and begged for absolution, which he had naturally granted.

Yet another *casus belli* arose in 1336, when Grandisson received from the Archbishop instructions to pay to the care of the Bardi (bankers) in London the tenth that was due to the Pope from the Exeter diocese. The reply was a not very polite refusal. It cannot be managed, he says, because he cannot act without the consent of the Dean and Chapter, whom he had appointed collectors; and they, having come together three days previously to celebrate the Festival of St Gabriel (instituted as a high day by Bishop Bronescombe), have now dispersed, and will not meet again for a long while. Besides which, it would be neither lawful nor prudent to lodge such money with laymen, especially outside the diocese.

We do not possess the requisite details to enable us to say what were our Bishop's relations with Archbishop Islip (1349–1366); but we may infer that he was on good terms with Langham (1366–1369), for in his will (1368) he bequeathed "to the Archbishop of Canterbury for the time being" (the actual legatee was Wittlesey) "my great dorser in the hall, bearing a Coronation of the Blessed Mary, with the twelve Apostles seated on thrones and holding the Creed, together with a pontifical ring to be worn while celebrating and fifty marks sterling (£557)."

When we pass on to consider the condition of the Church in the diocese during this period, we have to acknowledge that it is not easy to draw from the formal records very clear or certain deductions as to the characters and lives of the clergy. We find indeed that there were a number of criminous clerks, who had to suffer imprisonment; and the dispensations for illegitimacy reveal too many cases of moral lapse of men in Holy Orders. The farming out of benefices became very common, and had to be forbidden—a practice that may

indicate the prevalence of a seeking after money. But we do not feel that the Archbishop was justified in inveighing, as he did in 1352 and 1355, against chantry priests, because they were asking for an increase of fees ; or against parochial clergymen, because they had demanded larger stipends, and, leaving their flocks unshepherded, had resigned their benefices in order to " seek a chantry for souls." He accused them of avarice ; but after the Black Death the cost of living had risen, and his concession of an extra mark for the pay of an assistant curate was only a partial remedy. There are symptoms, however, of a secular or worldly spirit in the order to archdeacons to enforce the regulations about clerical attire. These had been generally disregarded of late, so that a clergyman could scarcely be distinguished from a layman, his tonsure being hardly seen. Henceforth his clothes are to be longer, reaching nearly down to the ankles, his hair is not to be allowed to grow sufficiently to hide his ears, and his tonsure is to be plainly visible.*

But the feature that seems to us most characteristic in clerical life, is the lack of reverence for holy things—churches, church services, and church ornaments and vestments. This is more than hinted at in an episcopal precept, charging the Archdeacons at their Visitations to see that the Church ornaments are bright and clean, for in some parish churches in the diocese the vestments are torn and unwashed and filthily dirty.† But fuller information is forthcoming from the reports drawn up for the Dean and Chapter by two of their number, who were deputed to hold a Visitation of their appropriated churches and chapels, of which 19 were visited in Devon in 1330 and 16 in Cornwall in 1331. Of the former, a clean bill of health was returned concerning Broadhembury and Culmstock, and scarcely any fault was found with Upottery, Branscombe, Topsham, Colebrooke, and Westleigh. But at Clyst Honiton, whose church, being but small, had no vicar, the assistant curate was leading a shockingly immoral life ; and, though the fabric was all sound, the furniture was in a poor state, many articles being

* *Register*, 959.

† *Register*, 1126.

altogether wanting (*e.g.*, a wedding veil, a funeral pall, and a lamp and bell for the sick), while others were in bad condition (such as corporals, surplice, pyx, missal, legenda, and portable cross). The church, chancel, and tower at Buckerell were all in a ruinous state, there was no canopy over the altar, and all the books were poorly bound and partly decayed and altogether insufficient. The chancel of Shute Chapel was dark and ruinous, and its door very bad; divers articles were lacking—canopy, wedding veil, lantern, incense boat, and Synodus (encyclical of the Synod of Exeter); and others were in sorry condition—pyx, manual, and antiphonary. Colyton Church was scantily supplied with books; it possessed neither lamp nor paschal candlestick, and some ornaments needed repair, though most of them were good. There was grievous complaint there, because the Vicar, who was a leper, would mix among the congregation in church, with great risk to their health, and the excellent Assistant Curate got no help from him in the conduct of the services. Monkton Chapel was badly roofed and almost in ruins, and all its books were unsound. Much fault was found with the roof of Salcombe Regis, especially the part over the south Chapel of St Mary Magdalene, and the windows were too dark. The Church was well appointed, but a few articles had suffered from age. Matters were fairly satisfactory at Topsham, but there were broken windows in both chancel and nave, some books were badly bound, the pyx was not suspended, and some things were wanting. The roof of Norton Chapel (in Newton St Cyres) was in bad condition, and there was no bier. At Winkleigh the books were few. Of Sidbury and Stoke Canon the reports have perished, and nothing is said of Ashburton, whose rector was enjoying three years' leave of absence.

In Cornwall the only churches well reported of were St Gwinear and St Breward, though St Veryan, St Mullion and Sancreed were perhaps passable. There were serious faults in the fabric of Altarnun, St Gwennap and St Issey, and many things were wanting at St Constantine and St Perranzabulo. At Boconnoc and Respryn (in St Winnow) and Broadoak most of the accessories of worship were lacking,

and the churchyard of the last place was not properly enclosed. From St Winnow came a sad story of neglect, for many ornaments were altogether wanting, and many others were defective; so that some of the parishioners had arranged to have a monthly Mass at St Nectan's, though there too there was scarcely any provision for services. At St Agnes Chapel repairs were needed in walls and roof, the vestments were worn out, and many other things were unsound or faulty. The chancel of St Erth was in danger of falling into ruin, and robbers had effected an entry through a window, and had stolen the chalice, books, wax, and other articles.

Manifestly, conditions were many degrees worse in Cornwall than in Devon, but in both there is ample evidence of widespread neglect; and we cannot help marvelling that the incumbents did not exert sufficient energy and zeal to effect the putting of their churches in good repair, and the furnishing of them with all that was requisite for performing the services decently and in order. The Church's organization, indeed, attempted to provide proper supervision, for an archdeacon was bound to make the round of his archdeaconry every year, visiting the churches, inspecting books and vestments and other goods, and causing them to be put in proper repair. We can hardly believe it possible that this could be thoroughly done, at least in such an archdeaconry as that of Cornwall. Certainly Adam de Carletone, who has left us the above definition of his duties, found himself unequal to the task when he was growing old, and consequently effected an exchange. Nor did the system of governing through rural deans prove efficacious, for the office was regarded as burdensome, and a man would either refuse to serve, or would obtain the services of a deputy to act instead of him—an evasion that the Bishop tried to stop by the issue of a mandate.*

The chronicles of the diocese bear clear testimony to a very low morality in several of the important Religious Houses; and worldliness, neglect, and debt called forth the severest strictures from the Diocesan. Most prominent of all was Benedictine Tavistock, the greatest and most

* *Register*, 712, 957.

famous, whose fortunes are detailed in another chapter, which shows that throughout Grandisson's first twenty years this abbey suffered from the grossest mismanagement on the part of its two Abbots, Bonus and Courtenay, both pleasure-seeking worldlings; the former of whom was excommunicated and at last deprived, and the latter was under threat of the same ban, and was suspended from administering his House. Naturally the lives of their monks shared in the contamination, being marked by serious irregularities; and even in the distant dependency in the Scilly Islands grave offences were laid to their charge.* St James's Priory at Exeter was brought to ruin and almost extinction by the misrule of the immoral Prior Byttedene, who was several times excommunicated by the Bishop. At Frithelstock Priory rules and discipline were cast aside, and the Subprior had to be deposed for incontinency.† Prior Knolle of Launceston was a man of scandalously loose morals, and was constrained to resign his office, as his misdeeds could not be tolerated.‡ At Bodmin Priory matters were so unsatisfactory that the administration of its affairs was entrusted to commissioners, and both the Prior and the Subprior were threatened with suspension.§ The canons of St Crantock Collegiate Church had so far come short of their standard of religious life, that they had abandoned their rule of residence, with the consequence that the worship of God was neglected. At St Michael's Mount, too, the Prior was so bad a governor that through neglect its revenues were wasted and the House was in debt.‖

These cases do not constitute a majority of the Religious Houses of the diocese, but it must be borne in mind that the discipline of the Cistercian Abbeys was no business of the Diocesan, and that the Friaries were entirely exempt from his rule; so that the instances given above prove only too fully that corruption was spreading in the monastic

* *Register*, 568, 716, 1050, 1071.
† *Register*, 925.
‡ *Register*, 837, 1002.
§ *Register*, 417, 979.
‖ *Register*, 813.

system, and that the high ideals of the dedicated life, whose outward expression took the form of poverty, celibacy, and obedience, were losing their beauty and their power. This was true of the friars as well as of the monks, and we can at that time detect an indication of their waning popularity and influence in the notices of the appointing of Confessors or Penitentiaries. In 1330 there were seven Mendicants and only two secular clergy so appointed for the diocese; but in 1354 the Bishop revoked his licence to them to hear Confessions in reserved cases, and in the following year appointed twelve priests to deal with reserved cases, of whom only two were Mendicants; and thirty-seven to serve as Penitentiaries for the clergy, all of whom were seculars.*

Of the ecclesiastical status of the incumbents of the diocese during the episcopate of Grandisson we are able to form a fairly complete estimate; for though his ordination lists have perished, his institutions are recorded in his *Episcopal Registers*, and in most cases the Order to which the minister belonged is carefully specified. The returns show that out of a total of 2,038 institutions, 1,150 were priests, and if—as seems not improbable—about 350 of the 478 whose Order is not specified were also in the priesthood, it follows that three-fourths were priests when they were admitted to their benefices. Still, the fact remains that the Bishop found himself obliged to commit a considerable number of parishes to the charge of men who were not in priests' Orders, for besides the balance of the 478 who were not specified, there were 410 others (38 deacons, 12 subdeacons, 6 acolytes, 3 first-tonsured, and 351 indefinitely described as clerks). We might have expected to find that he was driven to recruit the ranks of the beneficed by instituting more and more of those in Minor Orders after the plagues of 1349 and 1361; but this was not so after the former, though the stress was to some extent apparent after the latter; and it speaks well for the resources of the Church and the successful management of the authorities, that the standard was not allowed to deteriorate very seriously.

* *Register*, 558, 1143, 1146, 1149.

Educationally, too, the standard appears to have been high. Of the 2,038 instituted to benefices, as many as 1,536 are declared to have graduated—10 as Doctors, 244 as Magistri (M.A.'s), and 1,282 as Domini (B.A.'s), leaving only 502 not specified, the majority of these probably being non-graduates. Here, again, the proportion was well maintained until 1361, but after that there was a very marked falling off.

As regards the matter of pluralities—so frequently an ecclesiastical abuse—the condition of the diocese was eminently satisfactory. In 1366 Archbishop Langham made a return of all the pluralists in the Province of Canterbury, and therefrom it appears that in the Exeter diocese there were only 41 of such resident, and 34 without its borders. Most of these were merely cases of one man holding a canonry or prebend together with his parochial benefice, while others showed that the same person was at once a canon and a Cathedral dignitary, *e.g.*, dean or precentor; and again others were not actual cases of plurality, for in some instances an incumbent had only the promise of a stall. Occasionally we meet with a scandalous case of two parishes far apart being held by one incumbent, or of several posts being bestowed upon the same man; but the list of such includes few besides these:—the Rector of North Molton was also Rector of Rhossili in the diocese of St David's; the Vicar of Sutton (Plymouth) had stalls in the Cathedrals of Exeter and Bangor and in the Collegiate Church of Heytesbury in Wiltshire; and the Rector of Bideford was canon and prebendary of Exeter, Crantock, Bosham, and Llanddewi Brefi (Cardiganshire).*

One other feature of the clerical order is worth noticing, *viz.*, that of nationality; and here we are assured that practically all of the clergy were native born. In an age when England was for long at war with France, it was a matter of importance to find out how many foreigners were resident in the land; and on two occasions King Edward III issued his command for returns to be made, giving this information. In 1334 the Bishop was ordered to state

* *Register*, 1248-1262.

what benefices were held by aliens, and the list that he remitted contains 34 names. This, however, does not necessarily mean that the incumbents were foreigners, but merely (at least in most cases) that the benefice was appropriated to some foreign Religious House, or to an Alien Priory in England. The catalogue comprises these in Devon :— Axmouth, Barnstaple, Brixham, Broadclyst, Christow, Cowick. Crediton (1 prebend), Ermington (1 mediety), Harpford, Holcombe Rogus, Ipplepen, Modbury, Monkleigh, Okehampton, Otterton, Ottery St Mary, Sidmouth, Spreyton, Totnes, and Yarcombe ; and these in Cornwall :—Fowey, Lanlivery, Minster, St Anthony-in-Meneage, St Austell, St Buryan (deanery), St Clement by Truro, St Crantock (deanery), St Hilary, St Neot, St Veep, Tintagel, Treneglos, and Tywardreath. Again, in 1339 the Bishop was to state what ecclesiastical holdings were in the hands of foreigners. He could find only 4 secular clergymen who were aliens, *viz.*, the Rector of Bratton Clovelly, who was a Breton ; a Canon of Glasney, who was non-resident ; a Prebendary of Crediton, a Gascon, who was living abroad ; and a Canon of Salisbury, a Lombard, who held two prebends in Devon, but was studying at Oxford. As for regulars he mentions the same places as he had named before, adding also one Portion in Tiverton Church, Oldridge Chapel, and the Chapel of Valle in Cornwall.*

Among the many serious difficulties, with which Bishop Grandisson had to contend, must be placed the financial strain laid upon himself and his diocese in consequence of their subjection to the Roman Court. No doubt it afforded him much satisfaction to be able to support his claims to the exercise of abnormal influence and power, by quoting the terms of the papal privileges that had been conferred on him by John XXII, but he suffered acutely from the demands of the Pope and his Cardinals ; and yet Pope John continued his befriending patronage until his death in 1334, and Grandisson in his sorrow marked the event by a command that every priest in his diocese was to say Mass for the deceased pontiff.

As soon as Grandisson was appointed by papal provision,

* *Register*, 57, 760, 763.

he wrote to the Dean and Chapter to announce the fact; but at the same time he had to beg them to assist him in liquidating a debt of nearly 60,000 marks (about £723,288 in modern pre-war value), in which, so he was informed, his predecessors Bishop Bytton and Bishop Berkeley had involved the see and the diocese. The claim was afterwards reduced to 25,000 marks (£301,370)—half for the Pope and half for the Cardinals—and this sum Grandisson was compelled to pledge himself to find within fifteen months, under pain of excommunication and suspension from the exercise of his office. It was a laborious and distasteful task for him to wring so much money from his unwilling diocese, and it required appealing letters and strongly worded rescripts to Chapter and to Religious Houses, to archdeacons and to incumbents, before the funds were forthcoming. He had even to obtain loans from private individuals, and we not only find reference to 2,500 marks (£30,137) lent him by the Archbishop of Vienne at the Court of Avignon, but we learn incidentally that he had to undergo the humiliation of being bound to the Archdeacon of Totnes for £40 (£723), to Gilbert de Combe, a gentleman of Teignmouth, for £30 (£542), and for another sum to John de Brutone, one of his own Canons. Ultimately the money was forwarded through the agency of the Bardi, merchants of London, the payments being thirteen months overdue, by which time the grasping creditors had actually squeezed out of their victim as much as 29,465 marks (£355,195 in modern computation).*

But this was by no means the whole of the cost that was involved by the connection with the Roman see. The Exeter diocese was assessed at the sum of £9 5s. 0d. (£167) as its annual contribution under the heading of Peter's Pence. Grandisson experienced much difficulty in collecting the arrears due when he took up the reins of office; but then and afterwards the exaction was paid in full, at least for the years 1326–1332 and 1337–1339, though the payments were generally overdue.† Some conception of how grievous was this burden of Peter's Pence is suggested by a list published

* *Register*, 101, 156, 212, 224, 389, 394, 489.

† *Register*, 220, 360, 481, 556, 614, 723, 736, 871.

in 1317, which shows that of fifteen English dioceses named (Wales is not included) Exeter was assessed at the lowest sum, with the exception of Rochester, Ely, and Chichester.* Further, in 1329 the Pope demanded the first year's revenue of every vacated benefice—including all ecclesiastical offices, regular and secular, exempt and non-exempt—in the Province of Canterbury. He was at pains to explain that the dire persecutions and horrible wrongs, brought against God and the Roman Church and the Catholic Faith by heretics and schismatics and rebels in Italy, and the expense of defending the Church and the True Faith, had been so great, that it was necessary to augment the normal revenue by abnormal means, and therefore he must demand these First Fruits for four years. Grandisson had no alternative but submission, and in 1333 the Papal Nuncio, Icherius de Concoreto, issued his final receipt for the payment by the diocese of Exeter of £113 13s. 4d. for the first year, £53 17s. 8d. for the second, £30 8s. 8d. for the third, and £95 18s. 4d. for the fourth—a total of £293 18s. od. (£5,314).

But even this was not all, for from time to time we read of a tenth of ecclesiastical revenues having to be paid to the papal coffers ; and one demand covered a period of four, another as much as six years, so that this impost seems to have been fairly continuous for the first fifteen years of this episcopate. Some idea of the amount thus accruing to the Pope's exchequer is afforded by a certificate that the Dean and Chapter of Exeter had received for transmission £239 4s. 7d. (£4,267) as tenths for the year 1335–6. Naturally there was much unwillingness to pay the quotas required by the Bishop's collectors, and he had to write threatening letters, a number of persons even coming under the ban of excommunication for non-payment, among them the Dean of St Buryan. The hardship would be felt all the more, because home taxation pressed heavily too, the occasions being not few when the clergy had to pay a tenth to the King for the conduct of his wars or for his other wants—a tax which hit Grandisson hard, as in one year he had to pay

* *Concilia*, Wilkins, II, 469.

£49 (£862) on his *temporalia* alone*. Nor, even then, was the list of papal impositions exhausted, for the Cardinal Legates in England claimed large sums for their expenses, and each diocese had to contribute its quota. Thus, for the year 1338 Exeter sent over £105, for 1339 £121, and for 1340 £122, and in 1343 the Bishop received a receipt for £123, so that the total for those four years was upwards of £471 (£8,290); and further exactions were paid in 1345, 1348, 1349, and 1355, though the amounts are not stated.†

So outrageous were these demands, that we find Grandisson —though he owed his position entirely to the Pope—freely giving vent to his wrathful annoyance, and openly criticising the papal methods as applied through the agency of the Nuncios; and, as for the Nuncios themselves, he boldly accused one of them of an unscrupulous attempt at extortion, inasmuch as he had demanded both from Grandisson and also from other Bishops, Peter's Pence for two years, when he knew that only one year's payment was owing, receipts for the other having been given.‡

Bishop Grandisson experienced very serious difficulties from the disorderliness of the men of that generation, whose passions burst forth in ungovernable rage, so that they were not restrained by the threatenings of the law or the fulminations of excommunication, and showed respect neither to holy places nor to sacred persons.

The first of these rebellious outbreaks occurred in 1331 at Whitchurch, to whose rectory David Aliam had been duly presented and instituted. When the Bishop commissioned the Abbot of Buckland to induct the new incumbent, his task was rendered impossible by a band of armed men, who had barricaded the doors of the church, and strengthened them against assault by building a wall and digging a trench. No entry into the church was allowed, services could not be held, the Bishop's authority was set at defiance, and even the pronouncing of the ban of excommunication produced

* *Register*, 42, 45, 56, 60, 63, 65, 71, 82, 83, 295, 296, 582, 583, 637, 706, 789, 801, 811, 936, 937.

† *Register*, 868, 881, 885, 900, 978, 996, 1066, 1160, 1161.

‡ *Register*, 297, 298, 302.

no effect. It seems that Abbot Bonus of Tavistock disputed the nomination to the benefice, and it was at his instigation that a number of his monks and others, clerics and laymen, had raised the standard of rebellion. It was a troublesome case, and the Bishop had at last to apply to the King for the forcible ejection of the rebels, and to order the Archdeacon of Totnes to have the ban publicly and solemnly proclaimed in every church and chapter in his jurisdiction. Ultimately, more than three years after the commission of the crime, the perpetrators were brought to confess their error, and absolution was granted.*

The next occurrence of the kind—or rather a series of such occurrences—took place at Sutton, now better known as Plymouth. There, for some unrevealed reason, the bailiff of Plympton Priory, John Hayward, who was probably engaged in collecting the dues of that mother-house, was set upon by a horde of ruffians ; and, on his seeking sanctuary in the church, they burst open the doors, dragged him out, and so violently maltreated him with swords and cudgels that his legs were fractured in several places. Of course the miscreants thereby incurred the sentence of the greater excommunication ; but, as their names could not be discovered, the Bishop could do no more than charge the Archdeacon of Totnes and the Rector of North Bovey to have them repeatedly proclaimed in all the churches of the deanery, until they should sue for pardon ; and, if it could be found out who they were, a summons to appear before him was to be served on them.†

That outbreak occurred in July 1335, and in the following May there was further trouble in the same place. The Vicar was Nicholas de Weylonde, who, having been a Canon of Plympton Priory, had been instituted to Plymouth in the previous December ; but now a band of his parishioners and others forcibly ejected him from his office, and installed in his place a clerk named Roger de Trevyliaux. They further broke into Weylonde's house, and stole the contents, including money to the amount of £20 (£357), having in-

* *Register*, 603, 675, 704, 743.

† *Register*, 788.

carcerated him in Buckland Abbey; and when the Bishop sent down Walter de Kynelond, Rector of St Mary Arches at Exeter, to allay the trouble, they violently assaulted him and drove him out of the place. The Bishop might well complain of the civil powers for not taking action; but he did what he could, charging the Abbot of Tavistock to lay the church and parish under an interdict, and publicly to excommunicate the guilty—whose names in this case were known—including the Vicar's assistant priest and two chantry priests, who had acted as rebels against him. For more than a whole year this *impasse* continued, and then at last the ringleader Trevyliaux and others submitted themselves and were absolved. The Prior of Plympton was commissioned to visit the church, accompanied by the Vicar, and by the Rectors of North Bovey, Stoke Damarel, and Meavy, and others; and, having assembled the parishioners and addressed them, he revoked the interdict. Then, after the singing of the hymn "Veni, Creator Spiritus" and the ringing of the bells, was celebrated High Mass.*

A few years later a peculiarly distressing outbreak troubled the Bishop. He was staying on his manor at Bishop's Tawton, and on October 18th, 1343, was marking the anniversary of his consecration by celebrating in the church. But after the Gospel, while he was preaching to the clergy and people, a crowd of men, armed with bows and arrows and other weapons, burst into the church, apparently bent on slaying the Bishop and his companions. It seems that the attack was organized by John Peris, who falsely claimed the archdeaconry of Totnes, and the ringleaders were a nephew and a cousin of his. Confusion reigned in the church, and in the midst of the tumult Grandisson, having solemnly warned the offenders three times, laid them under the curse of the Church; and afterwards he even wrote to the Bishops of Winchester and of Bath and Wells to request that they would have the sentence published in their Cathedrals and throughout their dioceses.†

The same place was the scene of another greater disturbance

* *Register*, 814, 817, 823.

† *Register*, 979; *Somerset Record Society's Pubs.*, X, 477.

in 1347, when the youthful knight Theobald de Greneville, accompanied by a fully armed body of five hundred men, made a sudden attack on Bishop's Tawton early one morning, breaking into the manor-house, the vicarage, and the dwellings of the Bishop's tenants; and some of the inmates they wounded, and some they even killed. Of course the miscreants *ipso facto* came under the ban of excommunication, the formal pronouncement being made in Barnstaple Church and in St Mary Magdalene's Priory Church in that town by the Rectors of Tawstock, Heanton Punchardon, and Atherington, in the presence of the Priors of Pilton and Barnstaple.*

About the same time, and more or less as part—much the greater part—of the same movement of lawlessness that raised its head at Bishop's Tawton, was the lengthy Kilkhampton case. It began by one Walter de Mertone appropriating to himself the proceeds of that benefice, which was under sequestration, and setting the Bishop at defiance. Mertone was powerfully supported by Sir Theobald de Greneville, his kinsman, who claimed the right of patronage and presented him to the benefice, though Mertone had meanwhile appealed to the Pope and had lost his cause. The same claim was made by Sir John de Raleghe, whose nominee, Thomas de Cruce, was after investigation instituted by the Bishop. But Greneville was the stronger man, and succeeded in putting his presentee in possession. The rival patrons went to law about it, and at first the Court of King's Bench decided in favour of Greneville; but, on the Roman Court decreeing that the expelled Cruce was to be restored, they reversed their judgment. The defeated party, however, defied all authorities and refused to quit; so the Abbot of Hartland and the Prior of Launceston were charged with the difficult and perilous duty of ejecting them. But, on entering the village, they found that the church had been converted into a fortress, with windows walled up; and they were confronted by an armed force, who attacked them with swords, clubs, and bows and arrows, put them to flight, and pursued them along the road for a mile, shamefully

* *Register*, 1026.

maltreating their attendants and their horses. For a year and a half anarchy ruled supreme, the church being interdicted, and the guilty parties excommunicated and so proclaimed in the Cathedral and throughout the diocese. At last, however, the two rival patrons came to terms and together presented themselves before the Bishop at Chudleigh. Sir Theobald, on confessing his error and promising obedience in the future, was absolved, and was declared to be the true patron of Kilkhampton; Cruce and Mertone were both dropped; and Sir John's fresh nominee, John de Raleghe, was formally presented by Sir Theobald, and was instituted by the Bishop on October 28th, 1350, which put an end to this lengthy and unpleasant strife.*

Meanwhile, a flagrant act of outrage called for attention in the south. William de Tounstalle, a priest and commissary for the Archdeacon of Totnes, was seated before the high altar in Yealmpton Church, engaged in dealing with some disciplinary cases, and surrounded by his legal and ecclesiastical attendants, when a crowd of men, numbering some two hundred, rushed in, and, with swords drawn and arrows on the string, snatched away the documents from their hands, assaulted them, and drove them out of the Church; and, had they not been able to find refuge in Lady Margaret de Monthermer's house hard by, they would in all likelihood have been killed or suffered mutilation. The ban of the Church was formally published in Plymouth by the Abbot of Tavistock and others on Palm Sunday, 1348.†

Yet another incident of the kind was the Poundstock case, a particularly horrible one. When High Mass was about to commence on the festival of St John the Evangelist in the year 1357, a body of armed ruffians swarmed into the church; and, having waited until the service was just finished, they pushed their way into the chancel, and there before the altar murdered a man in Orders named William Pennon, and further proceeded to wound certain of his kinsmen, whose blood was even sprinkled on the vestments and ornaments. The usual course of banning the perpetrators

* *Register*, 1024, 1040, 1043, 1052, 1059, 1085, 1412.

† *Register*, 1041.

was followed, but we know neither the reason for the execrable deed nor the after results.*

Most astonishing of all was a shocking riot in the very Cathedral at Exeter, the leader being William de Gyldene, a former Rector of Uffculme, but then an incumbent in the Worcester diocese. In 1333 he had opposed the appointment of the Bishop's nephew, John de Northwode, as Canon and Prebendary of Exeter, and the quarrel had assumed so serious proportions that he had been excommunicated and had appealed to Rome. Five years afterwards, the same man presumed to outrage the chief church of the diocese by forcing his way in at the head of a band of men, armed with swords and bludgeons and other weapons, during the celebration of High Mass on the festival of All Saints. The noise and confusion were intolerable, and, in the midst of it, Gyldene demanded that he should be admitted on the spot to the canonry vacated by Reginald de Champernowne. Word was at once sent off to the Bishop at Chudleigh, who did all in his power to pacify men's minds and to punish the evildoers.†

There were plenty of other instances of bloodshed or violence affecting the Church in the diocese:—the Reverend Eustace de Teynmouthe, the Bishop's Procurator General, was set upon at Bishop's Teignton by eight men, who broke the law of sanctuary and wounded him almost to death in 1328; Richard de Selere, who had been thrice Mayor of Exeter, had to be excommunicated because he had assaulted John Davy, a cleric of the city, in 1333; Exeter Cathedral itself was polluted by bloodshed in 1355, and had to be formally purified; and while Thomas Poddynge, Rector of Exbourne, was sitting in Kilkhampton rectory, having been appointed coadjutor to the aged Thomas de Stapeldone, a cleric named Thomas de Moletone suddenly sprang forward, and stabbed him with his dagger.‡

Now, in all such cases as these we cannot help marvelling that the arm of the law was not efficient enough or powerful

* *Register*, 1193.

† *Register*, 287, 707, 891.

‡ *Register*, 440, 687, 844, 1163.

enough to bring the culprits to justice ; but the civil authority seems to have done little or nothing, and the duty of discovering and punishing the law-breakers was left to the Church. A distasteful function it must have been, and one hardly consonant with our idea of the work of a Christian bishop, but it had to be carried out ; and although the procedure may seem to some to savour of the childish or the grotesque, yet there is no denying that the popular mind was profoundly impressed by the solemn ritual of the vested clergy, the uplifted cross, the ringing of the bells, and the dashing of the lighted candles on the floor of the church, with the proclaiming of the awful formula, " As the light of this candle is extinguished, so may their good works be blotted out before God, unless they repent. Fiat ! Fiat ! Amen " ; or there was this longer imprecation :—" As these lights are actually extinguished before our eyes, so may their souls be blotted out in the presence of God and of Blessed Mary and of the Blessed Angels and of All Saints ; and may they be for ever handed over to the devil and his angels to be punished in the eternal fire, unless they repent and return to a better mind. Fiat ! Fiat ! Amen." * It would be difficult indeed to appraise the debt that the England of those days owed to Holy Church for what it was able to accomplish in the way of curbing unruly deeds and disciplining lawless characters, when the *fasces* were not used, and the enforcing of law and order was left in the main to the exercise of the power of the keys.

There were many other worries to harass the soul of Bishop Grandisson. Some of them were purely personal, such as the unkindly criticisms of his cousin the Earl of Devon at the very commencement of his episcopate ; or the repeated outrages in his parks at both Bishop's Nympton and Penryn, where he suffered much from the loss of timber and cattle and game ; or the knowledge that the rigour of his rule brought him widespread unpopularity.† Others were ordinary troubles, such as might arise in any episcopate. The parishioners of Liskeard had to be called to order because

* *Register*, 423, 1042.

† *Register*, 201, 246, 284, 427, 466, 558.

they had refused to pay the procurations due on the reconciliation of their churchyard, and those of Silverton because they had kept back their tithes from their rector; some evilly disposed persons had possession of muniments belonging to the See, and a mandate had to be issued for their restoration; and William Mugge, Archdeacon of Barnstaple, defied his Diocesan's inhibition, and persisted in holding Visitations when the Bishop had planned to do so in person, his defiance developing into an appeal to the Court of Canterbury. Others, again, were cases of greater moment, such as abuses and perversions of justice in the Consistory Court, which were made to vanish away under his reforming hand. More serious was a contention that he had in 1342 with the King's Commissioners, who had been sent down to deal with certain alleged misdeeds, and who condemned the Rectors of West Putford, Ashwater, and Warkleigh to banishment and outlawry, and even declared them worthy of death. It was plain that the Commissioners had erred, and the Bishop took up the cudgels in defence of his clergy, and boldly excommunicated their persecutors. There followed a summons from the King, but Grandisson won the day, and had the sentences reversed, and absolved the penitent Commissioners.*

It may be that Grandisson was naturally contentious, and certainly we find him often at loggerheads with others, especially with the highly placed. He complained much of his cousin, Hugh de Courtenay, Earl of Devon, and they were set in keen opposition to each other until the close of the Earl's life in 1341, the Bishop bitterly resenting his persecution of himself and his clergy and his lay people, and declaring that he defied all episcopal authority, and acted as though he were king. The Earl of Cornwall, too, John of Eltham, brother of Edward III, gave much cause for offence by his faulty administration of his duchy, whereby he incurred the episcopal wrath. It might seem poor policy to fall out with such magnates; but John of Exeter was not one to bow down to big men, and he did not hesitate to say and do what he thought to be right and necessary, without taking much count of consequences.†

* *Register*, 367, 409, 665, 689, 807, 961, 964, 1215.

† *Register*, 202, 293, 305, 939.

Some of the details of Grandisson's government of his diocese are worthy of mention, and the very recital of them is sufficient to show by their rich variety and their comprehensiveness how thorough and far-reaching was his rule.

He not only withstood the great and the powerful as the defender of his clergy against encroachment on their rights and liberties, even forbidding Archdeacons to claim their procuration fees except when they visited in person or by their Officials; but he championed the cause of the poor of his flock in a strongly worded remonstrance to the Sheriff of Cornwall, accusing him of exacting too much from them but sparing the rich in his raising of money for the King, and charging him to appear in person to answer for himself and to bring a fully detailed statement of his accounts.

He was a sturdy opponent, too, of all that he considered wrong or injurious to morals and true religion. He forbade the performance of an improper play, which was to have been put on the stage of Exeter theatre one Sunday in 1352. He excommunicated Margery Ryvel for practising sorcery and magic at Modbury and Dartmouth, and so perverting the minds of many of the faithful. He discouraged a too ready acceptance of pretended miracles at St Crantock and the Cornish Whitstone; and he censured the credulity of his Dean and Canons, who had the Cathedral bells rung early on Sexagesima Sunday in 1341 to celebrate the restoration of sight to John le Skynnere—who afterwards, on being catechized by his Lordship, confessed that it was all a fraud, and that he had perjured himself in the hope of making profit.*

A case of real moment was the disseminating by Ralph de Tremur of his strange views on the Eucharist. This man was a member of an ancient Cornish family, whose seat was at Tremur in Lanivet. In 1331 he was instituted to the benefice of the adjacent parish of Warleggan, though he spent the whole of his three years' incumbency in study at Oxford, where he gained fame for his learning. Twenty years later he became prominent in the west, travelling about

* *Register*, 941, 942, 1044, 1120, 1231; *Devon Notes and Queries*. XI, 122.

in Devon and Cornwall and combating the doctrine of transubstantiation. The good Bishop was terribly grieved and distressed by this novel teaching—for Wycliffe did not promulgate these views till more than a quarter of a century later—and proceeded to have his excommunication published in the Cathedral and in every church in the diocese. He commanded that no one was to hold any intercourse with him, either by talking or sitting with him, or eating or drinking: they must not pray with him, or give him any support or hospitality, and must avoid doing anything that would help him in spreading his detestable heresy. He also urged the Primate and the Bishop of London to take further action, for Tremur's activities had not been confined to the Exeter diocese, and he even spoke of referring the matter to the Pope (A.D. 1356). That is the last that we hear of the case; and, indeed, it is not easy to divine what more Grandisson could do.*

Other items of diocesan concern were the issue of new statutes for Crediton Collegiate Church, the publication of a table of episcopal fees (5 marks, *i.e.*, £59, for the consecration of a church, 40s., *i.e.*, £36, for an altar, and 5 marks or 40s. for the reconciliation of a church or cemetery), and the conversion of Bere Ferrers and Haccombe Churches into archpresbyteries. At the former place in 1335, under the patronage of Sir William de Ferrers, Rector Walter de Godamewy became Archpriest with four priests under him; and for Haccombe in 1341 Andrew de Tregors was instituted as Archpriest with five colleagues on the presentation of Sir John Lercedekne and Cecilia (de Haccombe) his wife.† A case requiring adjudication was that of St Wendron parish, which included the townstead of Helston. The appropriators —Rewley Abbey near Oxford—allowed the Vicar a miserable stipend and no house; so the Bishop arranged that they should build a good vicarage near the chapel in Helston, and should provide a liberal endowment. An effort was made to improve the teaching of boys in the Grammar Schools in the diocese; for Grandisson found that many masters

* *Register*, 1147, 1180.

† *Register*, 731, 836, 852, 1307, 1333.

were content to get their pupils to read, or perhaps imperfectly repeat, the Lord's Prayer, the Ave Maria, the Creed, Mattins, and the Hours of the Blessed Virgin; and then, before they had been able to gain any exact knowledge thereof, to hurry them on to more advanced books, maybe verses. Instructions were given therefore that boys were first to be well grounded in the earlier subjects; and warning was given that a mere knowledge by rote would not be allowed to qualify candidates for the first tonsure.*

Grandisson was what we should to-day describe as a "strong churchman." He ruled that Ordinations were to be held only in the Ember Seasons. He forbade the holding of Assizes in Lent. He was particular with regard to the Church's rules concerning Advent and Lent (both seasons were fasts at that period), but was ready to grant to elderly and weak women, who could not eat fish, a dispensation to take butter and milk during the fasting season.†

Most men have a hobby of some kind, and Bishop Grandisson, whose life's work involved much that was worrying and grievous and disappointing, was fain to solace himself with the study of what is implied by the expression in our Psalter—"the beauty of holiness." He was a lover of sacred things—books, vestments, ritual, the reverent performance of religious rites. He evinced great anxiety to recover ecclesiastical goods which had belonged to Bishop Stapeldon and were said to be in the hands of the Dean and Chapter of St Paul's Cathedral. He wrote to the Bishop of Lausanne to beg him to send him the chapel furniture, especially the books on the English Use, that had belonged to his recently deceased uncle, Sir Otho de Grandisson. He sought from the Archdeacon of Salisbury the loan of a pontifical, in order that he might have it copied, and thus be able to follow the Sarum methods. He was pleased to pay as much as £3 (£54) for a copy of St Augustine's *Sermones*, and requested that his agent would look out for other old and scarce theological works for him. He was distressed

* *Register*, 1036, 1192.

† *Register*, 384, 559, 602, 682, 769, 1207.

to find that the Nativity of St John the Baptist was not accorded due honour in Exeter Cathedral, and he ordained that henceforth it was to be observed as a high festival. And he showed his love of detailed orderliness by impressing on the canons and the ministers of his Cathedral that, in reciting the psalms, they must be careful to observe the break in the middle and at the end of each verse; and likewise in antiphons, hymns, and responses they were to make pauses, so that their voices should all keep together.* But most marked of all is his will, with its exact directions about the ritual of his obsequies, and the exceeding solicitude that he bestowed on the disposal of his immense store of vestments and holy vessels and books and other Church goods.

This love for holy things found expression in his literary work, which was, with the exception of his *Life of St Thomas of Canterbury*, chiefly liturgical in character. His *Ordinale*, compiled in 1337, consists principally of a lectionary, appointing lessons for every Sunday and festival, together with directions as to prayers and responses, the variant parts of the Mass, and orders concerning the conduct of the services. His *Legenda* in two volumes contains the Scriptures, Homilies, and lives of Saints read in course at Mattins. These two works are still preserved in the care of the Dean and Chapter; but his *Antiphonary*, which after him was called Grantson, seems to have perished.†

Bishop Grandisson's *Ordinale* includes his carefully compiled Calendar, giving a full list of festivals and commemorations. We find that the highest days at Exeter were Christmas, Easter, Ascension Day, Whitsunday, Trinity Sunday, Corpus Christi, the Assumption, St Peter and St Paul's Day (June 29th), St Gabriel's Day (September 2nd), and the Feast of Relics (Monday after Ascension Day). Other greater doubles were the Epiphany, the Purification, the Annunciation, the Nativity of the B. V. Mary, St Peter's Chair (February 22nd) and Chains (August 1st), All Saints' Day, and the Dedication of the Cathedral (November 21st).

* *Register*, 164, 174, 214, 240, 436, 697, 1226.

† *Register*, vol. III, lxxvi; H. Reynolds, 101, 111-116.

Double feasts of lesser dignity were the Circumcision, the Discovery and the Exaltation of the Cross, the festivals of the Apostles and Evangelists (including that of St John before the Latin Gate), the Conception of the B. V. Mary, the Nativity and the Beheading of St John the Baptist, the Holy Innocents, St Mary Magdalene, St Stephen, St Paul (January 25th and June 30th), St Barnabas, St Michael, St Michael in Monte Tumba (October 16th), the four Western Fathers, St Lawrence, St Nicholas, St Katharine, St Martin, St Augustine and St Edmund of Canterbury, the Martyrdom and the Translation of St Thomas of Canterbury, King Edward the Confessor, and All Souls' Day. A few saints of local interest were commemorated—Brannock and Petrock, Samson and Melor and German (the Cornishman as well as he of Auxerre), Boniface of Crediton, Bishop Aldhelm of Sherborne, King Kenelm of Wessex, and Bishop Osmund of Salisbury. Others worthy of notice are St Raphael, the appearing of St Michael, St David, St Kieran, St Bridget, Bishop Wulstan of Worcester, and Bishop Thomas de Cantilupe of Hereford (Grandisson's mother was related to him). Among many more were these favourite commemorations of the mediaeval Church :—" the seven holy Brothers " (martyred at Rome with their mother Felicitas A.D. 150), " the seven holy Sleepers " (martyred at Ephesus A.D. 250), " the four Crowned Martyrs " (who suffered at Rome in the Diocletian persecution), and " the 11,000 Virgins " (St Ursula of Cologne and her companions). It is worth while to note that Grandisson's Calendar includes all the entries that figure in that in the *Book of Common Prayer* of 1662, with the exception of Lucian, Bede, Lammas, Name of Jesus, and Evurtius.

The Bishop has been charged with displaying too pronounced Roman sympathies, and we are bound to confess that a scrutiny of the *personnel* of his Calendar supports the charge. He makes mention of a dozen popes, and about thirty individual martyrs or groups of martyrs belonging to the city of Rome, and the great majority are of no special importance in the Church, and without particular interest to Englishmen. We feel that Grandisson lost an opportunity,

for he might have given a place to many a local name, and thus have encouraged an enlightened and enthusiastic devotion to British and English saints, instead of crowding his Calendar with commemorations of obscure and unfamiliar Italians. He was sufficiently English however to fall in with the national exaltation of the festival of Trinity, instead of following the Roman usage of reckoning the season ensuing by designating each Sunday as "after Pentecost."*

It is worth while here to set forth his sequence of liturgical colours for his Cathedral, published in his *Ordinale*. It professed to be compiled "according to the custom of the Court of Rome," but it appears to have been modified by local customs.

This Exeter Use prescribed six chief colours—white, red, green or yellow, blue, violet, and black. (1) White—Christmas, Circumcision, Epiphany and octave, Purification and all feasts of the B. V. Mary and octaves, Maundy Thursday at the consecration of oils by the Bishop, from Easter Eve to the octave of Ascension Day, St John the Evangelist and octave, Nativity of St John the Baptist and octave, St Michael, St Gabriel, Virgins who were not Martyrs, St Mary Magdalene ("according to some, but others wear yellow, and others blue"). (2) Red—Whitsun Eve and Whitsun-week, Feasts and octaves of Holy Cross and Apostles and Evangelists and Martyrs. (3) Green—between the octave of the Epiphany and Septuagesima, from Trinity Sunday till Advent (but if the green vestments are not beautiful, white ones should be worn). Yellow or Green—Confessors. (4) Blue—Conversion of St Paul, St Peter's Chair, double feasts in Advent and between Septuagesima and Easter. (5) Violet—from Advent Sunday to Christmas Eve, from Septuagesima to Maundy Thursday (or, according to some, to Passion Sunday), Good Friday, Easter Eve and Whitsun Eve for the Lessons and Tracts, Rogation Days and vigils and other fasts, processions and masses on account of some distress, the September Ember-tide, Beheading of St John the Baptist ("because he descended into limbo").

* *Ordinale Exon.*, I, xxvii.

(6) Black—Good Friday (after the Creeping to the Cross), all services for the dead (though violet may be used). On Corpus Christi and octave—white and red (to remind of bread and wine, or of body and blood), the celebrant wearing white, the deacon red, the subdeacon white, and some copes being white, others red; so too for Virgin Martyrs. All colours together on All Saints', Feast of Relics, and Dedication Festival.

It would seem that this sequence of colours was not very strictly followed, for Grandisson himself by his will bequeathed to the Cathedral a full set of vestments of red and gold for use on the feasts of the Epiphany, Pentecost, and the Apostles St Peter and St Paul. It is noticeable too that he left a set of violet velvet vestments to be worn at his funeral and obit. Anyhow, his successor, Bishop Brantyngham, substituted a Sarum *Ordinale* for Grandisson's; and though local usages would continue in vogue, it is probable that they were gradually supplanted by those of the more important Cathedral.*

Bishop Grandisson stands out before us as a man of strongly marked characteristics. Foremost of all, we recognise him as one who set before himself a high standard of Christian life and ecclesiastical duty, and who, notwithstanding certain imperfections, was splendidly successful in striving to attain to that ideal in both respects. Wholly devoted to his work, unsparing of himself in the full performance of his duties—though hampered from time to time by ill health—he never allowed himself (so far as we know) to indulge in secular or worldly pursuits and pleasures. He was a man of quick sensibility, who was profoundly grieved by moral lapses and ecclesiastical transgressions on the part of members of his flock, whether clerical or lay; and the religious formulae of the salutations of his letters—so beautifully varied in their expression—were indications of a mind that was at once devout and unselfish.

But there was a less attractive side of his character. A strict disciplinarian, and unflinching in his resolve to

* *Ordinale Exon.*, I, 12; *Eng. Liturgical Colours*, passim; H. Reynolds, 118.

do what was right—so that he even refused to bestow a benefice in accordance with the request of King Edward III—he was stern in enforcing laws and regulations, and severe in punishing transgressors; and when his anger was roused, as happened not unfrequently, he would give vent to his feelings in language that to us of this present age seems not only harsh and violent, but so abusive as to be totally unbecoming in a Christian minister. We can find in his letters and his official records but scanty traces of suavity and kindliness, and we infer that he possessed few friends—perhaps one who wielded so freely the awful weapon of excommunication against high and low alike, could hardly expect it to be otherwise. To his kith and kin, indeed, he was generous; but here his generosity laid him open to the charge of nepotism. His brother William he made Prebendary and Archdeacon of Exeter (he died in the same year 1330), and his nephew of the same name was Prebendary of St Crantock. A nephew, John de Northewode, was Archdeacon of Exeter and afterwards of Totnes, and occupied stalls at Exeter and Bosham; and later another of the same name, probably a great-nephew, was a Prebendary of Crediton. Another Northewode nephew, William, held Paignton, one of the Bishop's livings, and his Lordship made request to the Abbot of Hartland to bestow on him a corrody or pension suitable to his position. Otho de Northewode, apparently also a nephew, was Archdeacon of Exeter, Treasurer of the Cathedral, and Prebendary of Ottery, Exeter Castle, Bosham, and St Teath. And he gave prebendal stalls in his diocese to two Patteshulles and two Montacutes (his two eldest sisters were married to knights bearing those names). This is a lengthy list, but one must be cautious in this matter not to judge a fourteenth century bishop by a standard of the twentieth; and we are bound to acknowledge that, except for a few foibles, in John de Grandisson we have a magnificent example of a mediaeval bishop, holy, good, able, energetic, wise; and that Exeter was indeed fortunate to be under the rule of so admirable a prelate.

This bishop attained to the age of 77, having held office for 42 years—the longest episcopate known at Exeter, the nearest in length being the 38 years of Bishop Phillpotts.

We infer that his powers waned during the closing years of his life, for we have no record of his presence at any other place than Chudleigh after 1361, and the last entry in his Register is dated November 16th, 1368; and, though in his Will he described himself on September 8th, 1368, as "sound in mind and body," we must not attach too much weight to the use of this common formula, but may perhaps attribute to weakened powers of mind and body the poorness of composition which is noticeable in that document. The end came at Chudleigh on July 16th, 1369, and his body was laid to rest, in accordance with his earnest desire, in the chapel at the west end of his Cathedral, where he had prepared his tomb many years before.

A document of deep interest is Grandisson's lengthy will, marred though it be by its extraordinarily bad latinity—bad in style, bad in composition, bad in grammar. Such defects, however, are more than atoned for by the beautiful humility and the deep piety that breathe their fragrance over it all. There is no trace of pride of birth, no mention even of high station in society or in ecclesiastical rank, but he speaks of himself merely as "John de Grandisson, unworthy and unprofitable servant of the Church of Exeter"; and, without ostentation, he impresses the reader with the conviction that here is the testament of a devout believer. It is the will of one who is a Churchman wholly and solely, even more so than that of Archbishop Laud; and his one desire, beyond his own obsequies, is so to bequeath his possessions as to profit the Church. Scarcely any relatives or personal friends are named; and not kinsmen or secular magnates are to be bidden to his funeral, but rather neighbouring bishops.

The estate was that of a wealthy prelate. There is no mention of landed property, but there is an astonishingly rich abundance of Church ornaments of all kinds, and also service books, besides a great quantity of gold and silver vessels, and jewels or other treasures. Most valuable of all was his precious mitre, which he had purchased from Bishop Stapeldon's executors for 200 marks (£2,411), spending further 120 marks (£1,447) in Paris to enhance its glory.

He possessed many other mitres, more than enough to provide one for each bishop in the Province; and the 15 copes and the 9 sets of vestments (chasuble, dalmatic, and tunicle) that are specified, were only some of his ample store. To his successors he left the precious mitre and most of his vestments and holy vessels and books, together with 100 oxen and 1,000 sheep and all the implements on the episcopal manors; but a goodly share fell to the Cathedral, and some articles to the Collegiate Churches of Ottery, Crediton, and Glasney, and to Chudleigh Church. Legacies were left to five abbeys (Tavistock and Hartland and Newenham being passed over), to nine priories, to five friaries, and to every leper hospital in the diocese, and to the prisoners in Exeter gaol. There were costly gifts, too, for the Pope and his Chamberlain, for the King and the Prince of Wales, for the Archbishop of Canterbury and a few others; and his tender affection prompted him to send a chasuble to the Church of Ashperton (his birthplace), some money to the nuns of Aconbury, near his old home, whose prioress was his sister Matilda, and a set of vestments to Haydour, from which he had drawn his prebend in Lincoln Cathedral.

With regard to his obsequies, there was one customary but scandalous abuse on which he resolutely set his disapproval —there must be no wine-bibbings of spiced drinks by night in the Cathedral choir, while his body is set there in the midst; but such, if they must be, are to take place in the Chapter-house or elsewhere. Another custom, so strange to modern notions of propriety, it would be vain for him to discountenance: nay, he would have no desire to restrain it, lest he should lose the benefit of the prayers of those in attendance; and so the usual apportioning of funeral gratuities was worked out in amazing detail and comprehensive extent, for every ecclesiastical person had his price, if present at the funeral. A bishop was to have, besides his expenses, an episcopal ring or a gold-worked mitre or some suitable jewel. The canons were to get forty pence (£2 15s. 0d.) apiece, the priest vicars two shillings (£1 13s. 0d.), the lay vicars and chantry priests and bellringers twelve pence, the choir-boys six pence; priests of the Hospital of St John

in Exeter and lay inmates were granted two shillings and one shilling respectively, and four pence (5s. 6d.) were to be paid to each priest of the diocese and to each monk or nun. Further sums were allowed for attendance at mortuary services during the ensuing thirty days, and a canon had the opportunity of making six pence a day, and a priest vicar four pence, with six pence or three pence extra if he sang the Mass.

What a wonderful funeral that must have been, as he himself had planned it—High Mass celebrated at the high altar, with the ministers in their full array of vestments of violet velvet, the same service being meanwhile offered in the conventual and collegiate churches of the diocese and in most parishes too ; the body of the great prelate lying in state, girt about by four huge candles of twenty pounds weight, while a pair of one-pound candles burnt on each of the many altars ; the full staff of the Cathedral present to mourn for the master who had been taken away from them after forty-two years of rule ; his own official and domestic chaplains in surplices and white hoods, and the members of his household not in black but in their best attire ; a hundred poor persons newly clad at his expense in white or grey cloth ; and the sacred building thronged by a multitude of great and small, clergy and regulars and lay people, all praying for him. And then at the close, after the absolution of the dead and the final benediction, the stately procession escorted the corpse down through the glorious nave, that he himself had built, to the west portal, to be laid in the little chantry-chapel within the thickness of the wall, with the leaden coffin-plate bearing this humblest of humble Christian epitaphs, based on the pretty but baffling reiteration of the adjective " miser " and its various derivatives :—" Here lies John de Grandisson, piteous Bishop of Exeter, most pitiable servant of the Mother of pity, through whose prayers her pitiful Son has pitied him, that he from his piteous state might be raised to bliss, and that to others in like piteous condition might be given hope of escaping their lamentable guilt."

If anyone's grave in Exeter was to be treated with

respect, surely it ought to be the grave of Grandisson, who took the greatest part of all in providing for the city and diocese their beauteous Cathedral. But, alas! his tomb is now a cenotaph, ungratefully and sacrilegiously despoiled at the close of the sixteenth century by treasure-seekers, who melted his leaden coffin, defaced his chapel, and cast out his remains. True, the Cathedral is his monument, and his effigy in glass (the gift of the late Dean Cowie) occupies a little window close by, but that foul deed we can never cease to lament.

CHAPTER X.

THE BLACK DEATH.

THE biggest happening in the diocese of Exeter during Grandisson's long episcopate—indeed the biggest in the whole of the then known world—both in its incidence and in its consequences, was the Great Pestilence, which has now for some centuries been generally spoken of as the Black Death, the descriptive epithet being due to the horrid appearance of the dying, and still more of the dead.

Like almost every other extensive epidemic that affected Europe, the Black Death came from the East, its origin being traced to central China; from which it spread westwards to the basin of the Mediterranean and eastern Europe, the infection being then carried on by refugees or traders from the Crimea to Constantinople, and thence to Italy and Sicily. From Venice it marched onwards into Austria and Hungary, from Sicily it crossed over to the Balearic Islands and Spain, from Genoa it quickly reached Marseilles and Avignon, where was the Papal Court, and northern France; and thence it arrived in England, ravaging also the whole of northern Europe, and even laying desolate regions so remote as Iceland and Greenland. Maybe, too, the mystery surrounding the ancient deserted cities of central Africa is to be accounted for by that whole tract of country having been depopulated by the terrible scourge of the Black Death. No such awful and deadly calamity has ever happened in the known world either before or since, not even the mighty European war of recent date, which in its four or five years' duration was perhaps accountable for about fourteen million deaths. The rumour that twenty-four millions died of the Pestilence in Asia alone cannot be more than a rough guess; but it seems that Europe lost considerably more than half its total population, and Professor Thorold Rogers, a most cautious investi-

gator, who emphatically decries exaggerations, considered that twenty-five millions, which was the reckoning of Hecker in his *Epidemics of the Middle Ages*, was "a moderate and probable calculation of the loss of population in Europe."* A confirmatory argument in favour of a high estimate is to be found in the established fact that a great epidemic is more virulent in its early than in its later stages; and the most searching examination tends to prove that in England, which was attacked later than most other countries, the mortality was upwards of fifty per cent. of the inhabitants.

The malady was of a most fatal nature, comparatively few of those affected surviving the sickness; and it was both infectious and contagious, and that to a really terrible degree, so that it was alike calamitous to touch the diseased or to inhale their breath. Consequently we read much—at least in continental accounts, which are much more copious than those of England—of the lamentable effects of terror, which so commonly drove people to desert their nearest and dearest relations and friends, leaving them to die in helpless and hopeless misery. The symptoms were of two kinds, which usually accompanied each other. One was the glandular swellings and carbuncles under the arms and in the groins, which were the common features of other pestilences, such as that which afflicted Europe in the sixth century (described by Procopius, Evagrius, and Gregory of Tours), and the Great Plague of London in 1665. When this phase was the only one, recovery, though not frequent, was by no means to be despaired of; but it was seldom that those attacked escaped from the throes of the other kind, which generally terminated fatally within three days, and often much sooner, sometimes even in a few hours. This consisted in a rapid development of gangrene in the throat and lungs, with acute pain in the chest, which brought about vomiting and spitting of blood, the breath and also the body giving forth a noisome stench.†

The Black Death, after ravaging Asia for three or four years, reached Europe in the autumn of 1347, and a year later

* *Work and Wages*, 224.

† F. A. Gasquet, 8-13.

the infection spread to England. We learn that the first place to suffer contamination in this country was Melcombe Regis, now better known as Weymouth, on the Dorset coast, less than twenty-five miles from the Exeter diocese. How the disease was conveyed thither we are not told, though it has been ingeniously, but not very convincingly, suggested that it may have been brought back by some of the twenty ships that were fitted out by Melcombe Regis to support Edward III in his siege of Calais, which capitulated in August, 1347. If so, their return was much belated, for the appearance of the pestilence in England is to be dated in August, 1348. This date is determined partly by the evidence of contemporary historians, which is divided between July and August of that year; and partly by the episcopal registers, whose entries show no marked increase in the number of institutions to vacant benefices until November—a circumstance that suggests the later rather than the earlier month. Further testimony is afforded by a rescript issued by the Prior of Canterbury, asking that all bishops in the Province should arrange for general prayers in their dioceses: the letter is dated September 28th, and shows clearly that the plague had already developed to a serious degree.

That rescript recites that the King had instructed the Primate to have intercessions offered for the peace of the Church and the Realm, and for preservation from the pestilence, but that Archbishop Stratford had died—apparently an early victim of the Black Death; so the Prior of Christ Church, exercising the authority vested in the metropolitical Cathedral of Canterbury during a vacancy of the see, commands the Bishop of London to give instructions that public prayers are everywhere to be offered, and that all bishops and priests are to say Mass with that special intention, and that sermons are to be preached and processions held every Wednesday and Friday. He grants indulgences to those who obey, and suggests that each diocesan should offer more, as he may think fit. The Bishop of London forwarded these orders on October 5th, and on the 30th of that month Bishop Grandisson at Chudleigh—where he fixed his residence during almost the whole duration of the plague—wrote his

directions to the Dean of Exeter, who was to publish them on the following Sunday in the Cathedral, and to make them known to all in the city and its suburbs. All priests were to say Mass, all other persons were to make their confessions and to offer psalms and prayers; and on each Wednesday and Friday till Christmas public and solemn processions were to traverse the city, to which were to be summoned all members of the Religious Orders, and all rectors, vicars, and assistant curates of the city and suburbs, a thirty days' indulgence being offered as an encouragement.*

The mention of Archbishop Stratford's death leads to the remark that as a rule the aristocracy did not suffer so severely as the populace. On the Continent neither the Pope nor any crowned Head was carried off by the Black Death, and only one member of the English royal family fell a victim—the Princess Joan, who died at Bordeaux on her way to Spain, where she was to marry Pedro of Castile. Canterbury, indeed, was singularly unfortunate, for John de Ufford, who was appointed to succeed Stratford, died before his consecration; and Thomas Bradwardine survived his elevation only a few weeks. But of the twenty-one other English sees only three were vacated at this time (Worcester, St David's, and Sodor and Man), and only four of the twelve in Scotland (Aberdeen, Brechin, Caithness, and Dunkeld), nor is it certain that all of these vacancies were due to the pestilence. On the other hand, Ireland was much more heavily afflicted, for twelve of its thirty-five dioceses lost their chief rulers during this short period. In the diocese of Exeter the majority of the high ecclesiastics were spared, the death-roll including only the Archdeacon of Totnes, the Treasurer of the Cathedral, the Subdean and Penitentiary, and four Prebendaries of Exeter. Some of the other prebendal Churches were harder hit, Ottery St Mary having seven privileged posts emptied, Crediton eight, Chulmleigh four, Exeter Castle three, Glasney five, St Crantock four, St Teath two, and St Probus two. The Bishop had to mourn the loss of a number of his own kindred, including two of his sisters (Katharine, Lady de Montacute, and Agnes, Lady de Northewode), two nephews (William de

* *Register*, 1069.

Grandissono, Prebendary of St Crantock, and John de Northewode, Archdeacon of Totnes), and two de Patteshulles, who were probably also his nephews (Peter, a Canon of Exeter, and Thomas, a Prebendary of Crediton). But, if the upper classes profited by the advantages and opportunities that wealth is able to bestow, it is very evident that the poorer classes were not able to escape from the sword of the destroying angel, and perished almost wholesale, the insanitary conditions of the fourteenth century, and in the towns the overcrowding, conducing to the rapid spread of such an epidemic.

In the Exeter diocese, the Dorsetshire boundary being very soon crossed, the pestilence seems to have lasted very nearly two years—from August 1348 to July 1350—the mortality being specially heavy in the last month of 1348 and the first half of 1349; and the acme must have come in February and March, for in March there were instituted to benefices vacant through death as many as fifty-seven clergymen, and in April fifty-one, whereas the usual average for a whole year was only twenty-four.

From statistics we learn that proportionally Cornwall lost more clergy than Devon. Also, the deanery (we take the present disposition of parishes) that was most grievously afflicted of all was Tavistock, in which, with the exception of Bradstone and Whitchurch, every one of the then existing parishes was bereft of its pastor, five of them twice over, and the great Tavistock Abbey also lost its chief ruler. The plague pressed very heavily, too, upon all the south-east part of Devon—the region near Dorset—the deanery of Honiton losing twenty-six beneficed clergymen, Ottery seventeen, Aylesbeare fourteen, Christianity twenty-nine, and Kenn twenty-one.

The parish in which the Black Death was most virulent, so far as clerical life was affected, was certainly Colyton, where the mortality was frightful. The village is less than six miles from Dorset, and from that plague-centre the infection raged in full fury on that ill-fated south-east corner of Devon; Musbury, Axmouth, Seaton, Southleigh, Northleigh, and Widworthy—all parishes contiguous to Colyton—losing their

incumbents, and Southleigh twice. Besides the benefice of Colyton, which was a vicarage in the patronage of the Dean and Chapter, the parish contained two chapelries, *viz.*, Colyford, a chantry-chapel a mile to the south of the village, owned by the family of Le Prouz, and Colcombe, half a mile to the north, a seat of the Courtenays. During the short period of seven and a half months, from November 1348 to July 1349, Colyton lost three vicars, Colyford three chaplains, and Colcombe one; and after an interval of nine months a fourth vicar fell a victim to the insatiable disease. We cannot be surprised that Andrew atte More's heart failed him, and that having buried one vicar a fortnight after he had been licensed to succeed the deceased William Bolde at Colcombe, and a second less than five weeks later, he should have resigned so perilous a post. Nor is it strange that Vicar William Coke should have removed to a cure in Somersetshire, lest he should follow the four preceding vicars to the grave; though, when the plague was over, in the ensuing year, he was back again as rector of the neighbouring parish of Gittisham.

It is very remarkable that in so many instances the summons came more than once to the same manse. In Devon there were no less than fifty-three cases and in Cornwall sixteen (without counting prebendal stalls) in which the plague claimed two victims; and Colyford, Colyton, Dawlish, Salcombe Regis, and St Veryan were thrice bereaved; at Colyton, as already mentioned, there being even a fourth visitation. Evidently the infection continued to lurk about in houses and churches, and a natural unwillingness to burn beds and furniture, clothes and sacred vestments, or the omission to have them thoroughly fumigated, caused the unfortunate newly-instituted incumbent to pay the penalty, and be laid beside his predecessor in the churchyard, or be cast into the same plague-pit outside the town.

History does not reveal how widespread was the mortality in the Religious Houses of the diocese, but of two of them we have particulars, though we know not whether the awful details may be regarded as a fair sample of what occurred in the others. We have, indeed, information concerning

a number of their chief rulers—the Abbots of Tavistock, Buckfast, Torre, and Hartland succumbed, as well as the Priors of St Nicholas's at Exeter (two), St James's at Exeter, Barnstaple, Pilton (two), Ipplepen, Modbury, Bodmin, Minster, and St Michael's Mount. The heads of Newenham, Dunkeswell, Otterton, Cowick, and Tywardreath survived; but of the others we have no record. Thus we have fifteen deaths and only five survivals, without reckoning such communities as St John's Hospital at Exeter, which lost its Prior, and Haccombe and Bere Ferrers, each of which had to seek a new Archpriest, and St Crantock Collegiate Church, whose deanery was vacated.

One of the two cases to which we referred above is Newenham Abbey, situated close to the Dorsetshire border, and bearing the full brunt of the pestilence in its earliest stages on English soil. In that afflicted place twenty monks and three lay brothers were carried off, leaving the Abbot and two monks only to survive them. The other case was Bodmin, where the plague was very virulent in the town, slaying the Vicar and about fifteen hundred of his parishioners. The Priory was almost depleted, and two monks appealed to the Bishop in March 1349, saying that they were the only inmates left alive, and begging him to appoint a new Prior as soon as possible. He thereupon without delay wrote to the Prior of Launceston, explaining that neither of the two survivors was suitable for the office, but that after consultation he finds Ouger Bante of his House in every way fitted, and therefore he requests the Prior to release him and send him to be instituted. This he consented to do, though loth to lose him; and only five days after the date of the two monks' petition, the post having been vacant but twenty-three days, the new Prior was invested with his authority at Chudleigh, and a mandate for his induction dispatched to the Rector of St Mabyn.

Other less definite indications of how sorely afflicted were the Religious Houses are afforded by a notice relative to Minster, which was so impoverished by the deaths of tenants and labourers that it was found to be impossible to support the Chaplain, who was to do the parish work,

as well as the brethren of the Priory. Also, we are informed concerning the Hospital of St Gabriel at Clyst St Michael (Sowton), which was a home for twelve retired priests, that the majority of the inmates died in the plague, and their places were not filled even ten years later. At St James's Priory, Exeter, conditions were so bad that there was not enough food to support the members, and neither the old nor the new Prior could keep residence; but the ruin of its fortunes was possibly due more to the faults of its rulers than to the effects of the Black Death.

One other piece of history must be given, for it is a proof that Grandisson found the ranks of his clergy sadly thinned; so that abnormal measures, shocking to the convictions of strict canonists, had to be adopted, if the Church's work was to be carried on with any degree of thoroughness. He wrote to the Pope, petitioning him to grant a dispensation for him to ordain fifty persons of illegitimate birth, and also to give him licence to ordain men under the regulation age for the priesthood, in order to supply vacancies in the Cathedral and in collegiate and conventual and parish churches. In his replies—two rescripts, both dated from Avignon on September 20th, 1349—Clement VI grants both petitions. The persons contemplated in the former may be advanced to all Holy Orders, and may be appointed to benefices, even with cure of souls. And he may ordain a hundred priests, and license them to benefices with cure of souls, provided that they have reached their twenty-first year and are otherwise fitted. But even men labouring under such disadvantages could not be found in sufficient numbers to step into the empty places; and when Grandisson's episcopate closed, only twenty-four had been induced to avail themselves of the former, and thirty-five of the latter, dispensation.*

England suffered for long from the bitterly felt effects of the Black Death, or "the Pestilence," as it was commonly named by succeeding generations. Unwise politicians vainly attempted, as early as June 1349, to cope with the labour difficulty by passing the Statute of Labourers. This law enacted that, inasmuch as employers found it difficult to get

* *Register*, 147, 148.

workers, the greater part of the working classes having already died of the plague, therefore all unemployed persons were to be bound to work for the same wages that they had received three years before ; and it was made a penal offence either to offer or to accept more. But the measure was quite futile, and although many employers were fined for breaking the law, they could not get their crops gathered in, unless they offered better terms to the strikers. The clergy, too, struck for a living wage, the price of food having risen, and incurred from the leaders of the Church the charge of being avaricious ; but they, like the working man, had reason on their side.

Before these social troubles had settled down, the Pestilence broke out again, not indeed so badly as in 1348–1350, but still with a fearful mortality. We trace it first in our diocese in October 1361, and it seems to have continued its ravages till the close of the following year, the most fatal time being about Christmas 1361 in Devon, and in Cornwall about Lady Day 1362. From a careful analysis of the Institution returns we calculate that during those fifteen months there died in the diocese 188 beneficed clergymen (120 in the Exeter part, and 68 in the Truro) ; so that about one quarter of the clergy were carried off, and we may reckon the death-roll of the diocese as half that of the awful scourge of twelve years previous. In Devonshire the (present day) deaneries that suffered most were Honiton, Kenn, South Molton, and Torrington, those on the north and south-west coasts being less heavily afflicted. In the Truro part death was most busy in the archdeaconry of Cornwall, finding many victims in the deaneries of Kerrier, Carnmarth, and Powder ; but the plague was rife too in the deaneries of West and Stratton in the Bodmin archdeaconry.

It has not been generally realized how very disastrous for the Church was this return of the Black Death, but, though the actual statistics make it appear that it was less deadly, the effects were more serious ; for the ranks of the clergy had been so much depleted, that the utmost difficulty was experienced in finding incumbents for the vacant benefices. This is proved by the very considerable number that

lapsed to the Bishop, as the proper patrons had no suitable candidates to present for institution. During the whole of 1361 only one benefice lapsed to the Bishop, but in 1362 the number rose to 13; and in the following year, though the plague had then abated, he had to find 19 incumbents for lapsed benefices; and further, to meet the necessity, in several cases it was found advisable to grant a dispensation for the holding of two benefices in plurality. The Religious Houses never recovered from those awful visitations, and the secular clergy as a body must have been for a long while sadly crippled by the reduction of their numbers.

The disastrous effects of the Pestilence in the west are traceable in divers circumstances that are noticed in contemporary chronicles. We learn that a large number of persons died intestate at that time—doubtless stricken down so suddenly that there was no opportunity for will-making. Even some four years later, the Bishop had to complain of Chapter livings lacking vicars, and of the cure of souls being still neglected as a consequence. Again, there is an entry in the Fabric Rolls to the effect that in 1349 the large sum of £10 (£171) was received by the Exeter Chapter from "gifts, legacies, and burial fees at the time of the mortality." And in the same records there is interesting evidence that work on the Cathedral was interrupted; for, instead of continuing the filling of windows with coloured glass, four hundred loads of clay with faggots and hay were used for stopping the openings in order to keep out wind and rain.*

Having thus reviewed the incidents of the history of the Black Death, so far as they concern our diocese, we now proceed to attempt to estimate in figures the magnitude of the scourge, dealing first with the numbers of the clergy who perished, and then with the laity. The calculation will be based chiefly upon the death-roll of the beneficed clergy, which can be gleaned from the Episcopal Registers of Exeter, and upon the Poll-tax Returns of the year 1377.

At the time that the Pestilence broke out, there were 574 parochial benefices (not including chapelries) in what

* Grandisson's *Register*, 1087, 1136; Oliver's *Bishops*, 384; *Archit. Hist. of Ex. Cath.*, 85, 136; *Notes on Ex. Cath.*, 13.

was then the diocese of Exeter (411 in the present Exeter portion and 163 in Truro), and 302 of these were rendered vacant by the decease of their incumbents (219 in Exeter and 83 in Truro), so that the percentage of vacancies was 52½. But a remarkably large number of parishes were twice vacated, several thrice, and one even four times; thus, including these, the parochial incumbents who died totalled 371 (270 in Exeter and 101 in Truro), so that the mortality among them reached the percentage of 64½.

These statistics may be accepted as fairly accurate, for while on the one hand no allowance has been made for vacancies occurring through normal deaths or other natural causes, which averaged twenty-four per annum during the ten years before the plague year; yet as a set-off against them we must place those ill-paid benefices which would be difficult to fill when the ranks of the clergy were terribly depleted, and for which there would consequently be no institutions recorded for some years—and it is only by such records that we know of the vacancies.

We next consider the whole body of beneficed clergy, *i.e.*, not only incumbents of parochial benefices, but also all those who had been instituted by the Bishop to the charge of chapelries and Religious Houses, as well as occupants of offices and stalls in the Cathedral and prebendal churches. In the year 1377 these were officially returned as 758 (559 in Devon and 199 in Cornwall), and it is probable that the number would be about the same before the Black Death. The Episcopal Registers show that about 446 (329 in what is now the Exeter diocese and 117 in the Truro part) died at this time. This gives a somewhat lower death-rate than the former, being a percentage of nearly 59. If we strike a balance between these two reckonings (of which the former is perhaps the more dependable) we may feel that we shall not be far wrong in estimating the real percentage at 62.

Again, the Poll-tax Returns for 1377 put the number of unbeneficed clergy in the diocese at 1,243 (756 in Devon and 487 in Cornwall). Here we are not on so sure ground, as it is likely that the unbeneficed (including the Religious Orders) were considerably more numerous in 1348; for while many

of those were instituted to benefices in order to fill the vacancies caused by the pestilence, it must have been difficult to find recruits to succeed them, especially in Conventual Houses. However, if we reckon only 1,243 as the number in 1348, and apply the 62 per cent. death-rate, we get the calculation of 770 deaths (468 in Devon and 302 in Cornwall).

Thus, the total death-roll of clergy in the diocese would amount to at least 1,216 (797 in Devon and 419 in Cornwall).

Then, as to the laity. The Poll-tax Returns of 1377 give the number of taxpayers (those over fourteen years of age) as 86,812 (52,538 in Devon and 34,274 in Cornwall), so the total lay population, including children, may be calculated as 157,840 (95,524 in Devon and 62,316 in Cornwall). From this we reckon that the population of the diocese just previous to the Black Death was 263,067 (159,207 in Devon and 103,860 in Cornwall). By taking the same percentage as before we arrive at the estimate of 163,101 deaths (98,708 in Devon and 64,393 in Cornwall).

Therefore the grand total of deaths in the Exeter diocese during the Black Death, including both clergy and laity, would reach the terribly high figure of about 164,300 (99,500 in Devon and 64,800 in Cornwall) ; and of these (if the average was maintained) Plymouth with a population of 8,850 must have lost about 5,500, Exeter with 3,000 would lose about 1,900, and Dartmouth with 930 would lose 580, no other town in the diocese being sufficiently large to figure in the Poll-tax Returns.*

It may be added that, reckoning the population of England at 2,640,000 in 1377, and at 4,400,000 before the Black Death, and calculating according to the same proportion as above, we get a total death-roll of the country amounting to about 2,750,000.† This is in close accord with Dr Jessopp's computation that "more than half the population of East Anglia was swept away by the Black Death. If any one should suggest that *many more* than half died, I should not be disposed to quarrel with him."‡

* *Archaeologia*, VII, 337.
† *Cf.* F. A. Gasquet, 85, 225.
‡ *The Coming of the Friars*, 206.

We have not sufficient data to make us feel confident concerning the statistical calculation of the mortality during the second prevalence of the Black Death. We can only say that such information as we possess makes it appear that about half as many deaths occurred then; and, if that was so, we reckon the victims at about 1,325,000 in England, and 82,000 in the Exeter diocese.

If the above figures are even approximately true, it is manifest that the Black Death was a calamity of colossal magnitude; and we search through the world's history for anything comparable to it, but we search in vain. As regards the actual death-roll, this was undoubtedly the mightiest visitation that man has ever experienced; and the worst epidemic or famine has assuredly never carried off so large a proportion of the inhabitants of any country. As a scourge of humanity the Black Death stands alone for its awful fatality.

It is worth while to preserve the list of the Church's loss of incumbents in the Exeter diocese during that terrible time of the Pestilence of 1348–1350; so we set down here, arranged in present-day archdeaconries and deaneries, the posts that were filled up because they had been rendered void by death, appending to the name of each deanery the number of then existing parochial benefices.

Archdeaconry of Exeter.

Deanery of Aylesbeare (23). Aylesbeare (twice), Bicton (twice), Budleigh, Clyst St George, Clyst St Michael (*alias* Sowton), Huxham, Littleham, Newton Poppleford (twice), Otterton, Poltimore, Whimple (twice).

Deanery of Cadbury (21). Brampford Speke (twice), Cadbury (twice), Crediton precentorship and treasurership and six prebendal stalls, Down St Mary (twice), Newton St Cyres, Nymet Tracy (*alias* Bow, twice), Shobrooke, Stockleigh English, Woolfardisworthy.

Deanery of Christianity (23). The posts of Treasurer, Subdean and Penitentiary, and Archdeacon of Totnes, and four prebendal stalls in Exeter Cathedral; three prebendal stalls in the Chapel of Exeter Castle; the priories of St James's, St Nicholas's (twice), and St John's Hospital; the

city livings of Holy Trinity, St Edmund's (twice), St James's (twice), St Martin's, St Mary Arches, St Mary Major's, St Olave's, St Paul's, St Petrock's (twice), and St Stephen's (twice); and the vicarage of Heavitree (twice).

Deanery of Cullompton (19). Bradninch, Burlescombe, Cullompton, Culmbridge Chantry, Halberton, Huntsham (twice), Sampford Peverell, Uploman (twice).

Deanery of Honiton (25). Awliscombe, Axminster, Axmouth, Colcombe, Colyford (thrice), Colyton (four times), Combe Pyne, Combe Raleigh (twice), Cotleigh, Farway, Gittisham, Luppitt, Musbury, Northleigh, Seaton, Southleigh (twice), Uplyme, Upottery, Widworthy.

Deanery of Kenn (21). Alphington, Ashcombe, Ashton, Bishop's Teignton (twice), Bridford, Cheriton Bishop, Dawlish (thrice), Doddiscombsleigh, Dunchideock, Dunsford, Exminster, Holcombe Burnell, Kenn, Kenton, Mamhead (twice), Powderham, Whitstone.

Deanery of Ottery (13). The offices of Warden, Precentor (twice), and Minister, and three prebendal stalls at Ottery St Mary; and the incumbencies of Broadhembury, Buckerell (twice), Feniton, Peyhembury, Salcombe Regis (thrice), Sidbury, Sidmouth.

Deanery of Tiverton (16). Bampton (twice), Cadeleigh, Calverleigh, Cruwys Morchard, Loxbeare, Morebath, Okeford, Rackenford, Tiverton.

Archdeaconry of Totnes.

Deanery of Ipplepen (8). Ipplepen rectory and Priory, Paignton, St Mary Church (twice), Torre Abbey, Townstal.

Deanery of Moreton (23). Abbot's Kerswell, Ashburton (twice), Bovey Tracy, Chudleigh, Denbury, East Ogwell, Hennock, Ideford (twice), Ilsington (twice), Lustleigh, Manaton, North Bovey, Teigngrace, Trusham, Wydecombe-in-the-Moor.

Deanery of Okehampton (21). Ashbury, Beaworthy (twice), Belstone, Bratton Clovelly (twice), Brightley, Broadwoodkelly, Gidleigh, Hatherleigh, Highampton, Honeychurch, North Lew (twice), North Tawton (twice), Okehampton, South Tawton, Throwleigh.

Deanery of Totnes (19). Ashprington (twice), Buckfast Abbey, Buckfastleigh, Dartington, Dean Prior (twice), Diptford, Rattery, South Brent, Staverton, Stoke Gabriel, Totnes (twice), Totnes Chantry of St Edmund (twice).

Deanery of Woodleigh (16). Aveton Giffard Chantry, Dodbrooke, Portlemouth, Thurlestone, Woodleigh (twice).

Archdeaconry of Plymouth.

Deanery of Plympton (13). Egg Buckland (twice), Ermington rectory, Ermington vicarage, Harford, Hemerdon (twice), Modbury, Modbury Priory, Tamerton Foliot (twice).

Deanery of Tavistock (20). Bere Ferrers, Buckland Monachorum (twice), Coryton, Dunterton, Kelly, Lamerton, Lew Trenchard, Lifton, Lydford (twice), Marystowe, Meavy, Milton Abbot, St Mary Tavy, St Peter Tavy (twice), Stowford, Sydenham Damarel, Tavistock (twice), Tavistock Abbey, Walkhampton (twice).

Deanery of the Three Towns (2). (None.)

Archdeaconry of Barnstaple.

Deanery of Barnstaple (19). Barnstaple Chapelry of St Thomas-by-the-Bridge, Barnstaple Priory, Bishop's Tawton, Braunton (twice), Fremington, Fremington Chantry, Georgeham, Horwood, Ilfracombe, Instow, Mortehoe Chantry, Newton Tracy, Pilton Priory (twice), Raleigh Chapelry (Pilton).

Deanery of Chulmleigh (18). Ashreigney (twice), Bondleigh (twice), Burrington, Chawleigh, Cheldon, Chulmleigh, three prebendal stalls at Chulmleigh, Eggesford, Nymet Rowland, Wembworthy (twice), Winkleigh (twice), Zeal Monachorum.

Deanery of Hartland (13). Alwington, Hartland Abbey, Landcross, Littleham, Lundy Island, Monkleigh, Wear Giffard.

Deanery of Holsworthy (17). Bradford, Bradworthy, Halwill, Holsworthy, Luffincott (twice), Sutcombe, Tetcott, Trewen Chapelry (Holsworthy), West Putford.

Deanery of Shirwell (18). Arlington (twice), Berrynarbor, Brendon, Goodleigh, Loxhore, Martinhoe, Parracombe.

Deanery of South Molton (21). Bishop's Nympton, Chittlehampton, East Anstey, Knowstone and Molland, Mariansleigh, North Molton, Romansleigh, Satterleigh.

Deanery of Torrington (21). Alverdiscott, Beaford, Buckland Filleigh, Dolton, High Bickington, Huish, Iddesleigh, Langtree, Chapelry in Little Torrington (twice), Meeth, Merton, Newton St Petrock, Petrockstowe (twice), Roborough, Shebbear, Chapel of St James in the Castle at Torrington (twice).

Archdeaconry of Cornwall.

Deanery of St Austell (9). Mevagissey, Roche, St Austell Chantry, St Goran, St Mewan, St Stephen's-in-Brannel (twice).

Deanery of Carnmarth (7). The sacristanship and four prebendal stalls at Glasney, Redruth, St Gluvias, St Gwennap.

Deanery of Kerrier (15). Landewednack (twice), Mawnan, St Constantine, St Grade, St Mawgan, St Ruan Major, St Ruan Minor.

Deanery of Penwith (14). Gulval, St Erth, St Gwinear, St Hilary, St Just-in-Penwith, St Ludgvan, St Madron, St Michael's Mount Priory, St Perranuthno, St Phillack, St Uny Lelant, Sancreed.

Deanery of Powder (19). Lamorran (twice), Philleigh, St Allen, St Feock, St Gerrans, St Just-in-Roseland, St Kea, St Michael Penkevil, St Probus, a prebendal stall at St Probus, St Veryan (thrice), Truro.

Deanery of Pydar (14). The deanery and three prebendal stalls at St Crantock, St Cubert (twice), St Enoder, St Merryn, St Newlyn (twice), St Petroc Minor, St Wenn.

Archdeaconry of Bodmin.

Deanery of Bodmin (15). Bodmin, Bodmin Priory, Egloshayle, Helland (twice), Lanivet, St Endellion, St Kew (twice), St Minver, St Winnow, Warleggan, Withiel.

Deanery of East (18). Antony, Botus Fleming (twice), Landrake (twice), Pillaton, Quethiock, St Dominic, St Ive, (twice), St Mellion, South Hill (twice).

Deanery of Stratton (11). Launcells (twice), Morwenstow, St Gennys, Stratton, Week St Mary, Whitstone (twice).

Deanery of Trigg Major (13). Altarnun, Broadwoodwidger, Lawhitton, North Hill, South Petherwyn (twice).

Deanery of Trigg Minor (12). Forrabury, Minster Priory, two stalls at St Teath, Tintagel.

Deanery of West (16). Boconnoc, Duloe, Lammana Chapel (Talland), Lanteglos-by-Fowey, Morval (twice), Pelynt, St Cleer, St Keyne, St Veep.

CHAPTER XI.

GRANDISSON'S SUCCESSORS.

LIKE his greater and more famous predecessor, Thomas de Brantyngham was a courtier, not however in the *entourage* of the Roman Pontiff, but from his youth brought up as a retainer of the King and Queen of England, who in course of time appointed him to be Keeper of the Wardrobe, and then promoted him to the honourable and lucrative post of Treasurer of the Exchequer with a salary of £366 (£6,039) a year.*

He too was brought to Exeter from afar, being a north-countryman from the East Riding of Yorkshire and a member of the family of Brantyngham of Brantyngham, a parish situated a few miles west of Hull; but he enjoyed this advantage over Grandisson, that he already had connection and probably personal acquaintance with his future diocese. Pope Urban V speaks of him as a Canon of Exeter at the time of his elevation, though the record of his promotion is not discoverable; and we know from his own statement that he had previously purchased the advowson of Mortehoe with the express object of providing from its income a chantry in Exeter Cathedral for intercessions for his own soul and the souls of his two royal benefactors. The scheme was not fulfilled for some years; but in 1379 he was able to arrange that, from and after the next vacancy at Mortehoe, the Dean and Chapter were to receive the emoluments of the benefice, and were to appoint two chantry priests, who (after his decease) were to offer daily in the Cathedral for King Edward III and Queen Philippa and himself. Their vicar at Mortehoe was to receive from them a stipend of £10 10s. 0d. (£171) with a house and half an acre of glebe; each chantry priest was to have £5 (£82) and the usual fees for obits; and (after the custom of those times) each member

* *Issue Roll of* 1370, 29, 158, 253, 262, 296, 422, 427.

of the Cathedral staff was allowed a gratuity, ranging from twelve pence (16s. 5d.) for a canon down to two pence (2s. 9d.) for a choir-boy, for attendance at the annual Offices for the Dead on the anniversary of each of the three who were thus commemorated.*

That was an age that produced several prominent churchmen. Simon of Sudbury was Primate during the first half of Brantyngham's episcopate, his cruel assassination occurring in 1381; William Courtenay's rule at Hereford and London and Canterbury covered his term of office; and another of his fellows was Henry Spencer of Norwich, most militant of English prelates, who defeated the Peasants' Revolt and led the Papal Crusade against the Clementines. But the most famous of his contemporaries were William of Wykeham and John Wycliffe, who were both born in 1324 (which was probably the approximate date of his birth too), and who died, the latter, ten years before Brantyngham, and the former ten years after. We hear nothing of any personal dealings of our Bishop with Wycliffe, but he and Wykeham were thrown much together, not in their early years (apparently neither was a university man), but in their political careers; for Wykeham came to the fore as Chancellor in 1368, a year after his consecration as Bishop of Winchester, and Brantyngham joined him as Treasurer in 1369, and became Bishop of Exeter next year. They both fell from office in 1371, but they were afterwards intimately associated for many years in common work for the State as well as for the Church.

In the Middle Ages it was not easy to find a man of good repute, who combined in his own person those two qualifications that are of such paramount importance for a High Officer of State—ability and scholarship. It was not favouritism, but policy, that induced the Sovereign so often to choose a churchman for such posts; for a layman was in most cases no scholar, and consequently bishops were frequently appointed to the *rôle* of Chancellor or Treasurer, and sometimes to that of Justiciary or Privy Seal. There were a few lay Chancellors in the reign of the third Edward, but otherwise, down to the middle of the sixteenth century,

* *Register*, II, vii; Oliver's *Bishops*, 484.

it was exceptional for that high dignity to be bestowed on any one who was not in Holy Orders. Among the sixty-five bishops who held the Great Seal we can enumerate as many as nine Bishops of Winchester, among them being such famous men as Swithun and Wykeham, Beaufort and Waynflete, Wolsey and Gardiner; and other well known Chancellors were Becket and Sudbury, Morton and Warham.* Undeniably a benefit to the State to be so served, it was yet a cause of jealousy to secular magnates; but, though from time to time strong protest was called forth, the bishops were found to be actually indispensable. To the Church, however, it was a serious hindrance to have its leaders occupied by secular business, and many a diocese must have suffered much from the consequent absenteeism of its chief ruler. We have seen this exemplified at Exeter when Stapeldon was Treasurer, and later, Church work was necessarily neglected in the episcopates of Chancellors Stafford and Neville and of Privy Seal Foxe.

Brantyngham was another such, for, owing to his being Treasurer, he was not able to visit his diocese till fourteen months had elapsed after his consecration, by which time the Church in the west had been bishopless for two years. Maybe, Exeter would not have had him even then, had it not been that Edward III had been compelled to give way to popular demand, and dismiss all his clerical ministers; but six years later he was recalled to office at the accession of Richard II, and continued to serve the State for thirteen years, until advancing age prompted him to seek and obtain the royal permission to retire, and devote himself for his last five years to his episcopal duties. He was not Treasurer all the while, but in various ways he proved himself a useful and trustworthy public servant, being one of the eleven lords who were commissioned to take the control of the disordered realm and royal household; and, when after his death the action of the eleven was discredited, his character was cleared by the King's public declaration, on the petition of the Commons, that he had been both innocent and loyal.†

* *Lives of Lord Chancellors*, passim.

† *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, Supplement, I, 260.

Brantyngham's ecclesiastical career before his elevation was not, so far as we know, specially remarkable; but he held benefices in Northamptonshire, in London, in Leicestershire, and in Somerset, and was Treasurer of Wells Cathedral, and Canon of Hereford and of St Paul's—thus gaining wide experience of Church work in town and country, and of Cathedral duties and responsibilities. Evidently he was recognised as fitted for high office, for in 1369 the Chapter of Hereford elected him to be their Bishop; but their desire was frustrated by the Pope, who provided for that see William Courtenay in his stead. Had the vacancy at Exeter occurred a month or two sooner, his Holiness might more reasonably have appointed Courtenay to his native Exeter, of which he was then a canon, that he might minister in the county where his family's influence was unrivalled, and thus leave Brantyngham to rule at Hereford. However, the Exeter Chapter were fain to copy the action of their brethren at Hereford; and they were more successful, for, though the Pope addressed his letters to the Cathedral Chapter and to the clergy of the city and diocese of Exeter and to the laity, protesting that he had reserved the appointment to himself and that he had absolute power in the matter, his provision coincided with their choice; and Thomas de Brantyngham was consecrated to the see of Exeter at Stepney on May 12th, 1370, by the Primate, Simon of Sudbury.*

Though not a man of such strong character or of such marked ability as his predecessor, Brantyngham was one of more even temperament than Grandisson, and his episcopate save for his shortlived but stormy contention with Archbishop Courtenay, was a time of peace. There was no repetition of the recent quarrels of the bishop with the great men of his diocese; he did not find his clergy personally troublesome to himself; and his relations with his people seem to have been happier, so that he appears to have suffered no worse worries from them than a trespass in his park at Pawton and a little deer-stealing at Crediton and Morchard Bishop. We gather that, while he was innocent of the *hauteur* that characterized

* *Register*, 3, 6-8, 904; vol. II, vii.

the princely Grandisson, he was more gentle and considerate in his dealings with men, both clerics and laymen.

So far as we are able to judge, his rule of the diocese was wise and good; and he conscientiously did his best to arrange for the performance of his duties during his lengthy absences on State business, though it must be confessed that his work suffered in consequence. Financially he seems to have been in easier circumstances than his predecessor, being not so heavily mulcted by the Papal Court at the outset, and also more free from exactions afterwards. His initial expenses, indeed, amounted to £441 (£7,276), which he paid in full in January 1372; and, though soon afterwards he received 2,000 marks (£22,000) from Grandisson's executors, he was still hampered by having had to borrow largely to meet the demands of the Pope and his Cardinals, for we learn that a year later he was indebted to a London merchant to the extent of £168 (£2,772). After that, however, he was able to pay his way, and he found useful the tithe of tin, sometimes described as coinage dues, that was paid to him annually by the King, £10 (£165) accruing from Devon and £6 13s. 4d. (£110) from Cornwall. Nor did later demands from Rome press much upon the Bishop and the diocese at that time—the nationalist movement had taken effect—so that we read of the payment of only two years' procurations for the Cardinals (£46, *i.e.*, £759, in 1372, and £40, *i.e.*, £660, in 1373), and Peter's Pence for one year only (£9 5s. od., *i.e.*, £153, for 1372).*

In the routine work of his diocese he appears to have been as diligent as circumstances permitted. To cross the Tamar ten times in twenty-four years might be a poor record in modern days, but for a fourteenth century bishop it was fairly good; and he paid official visits to a considerable number of parishes in both Devon and Cornwall. In formal Visitations too he did well, holding three in his Cathedral at intervals of six years, one for Cornwall in 1375, and general ones for the whole diocese in 1381 and 1387, besides two specially exhaustive ones of Tavistock Abbey, and one of Hartland Abbey and St German's Priory and Glasney Colle

* *Register*, 5, 230, 264, 288, 291, 295, 300, 409, 438, 598.

giate Church. The Injunctions that he issued after his Visitations were exceedingly full, and show how thoroughly and carefully he had investigated all conditions. Those directed to the Dean and Chapter after his last Visitation reveal his opinion that discipline was somewhat lax and regulations were not generally or scrupulously observed, but evidently there was nothing seriously or gravely amiss.* Several of the Religious Houses, however, deserved severe reprobation—Hartland and St German's both failed to amend in response to the Bishop's mandate for reformation; moral evils refused to be checked at Glasney, and the nuns of Polslo persisted in their misconduct, and the Prior of Otterton had to be excommunicated for the sin of fornication; the Prior of St Nicholas's in Exeter disobeyed a command to get rid of his hounds, which he kept in the sacred precincts, and was cited to appear before the Diocesan; and at Tavistock a general laxity prevailed, besides a long standing and serious dissension between the Abbot and the monks.†

As regards the morality of the parochial clergy Brantyngham found but little to complain of. It would be surprising indeed if there were not some black sheep in so large a flock, and the few cases brought to light appear to be exceptions only—a Vicar of Brampford Speke was guilty of adultery and incest; a Vicar of Broad Hempston was immoral and excommunicate, and being unrepentant was handed over to the secular authorities to be punished; a Rector of Cheriton Fitzpaine had to be proceeded against for fornication; and a Vicar of Modbury of his own free will came forward and confessed his sin of incontinency. The old trouble of clerical marriages, however, still existed, and the very last entry in the *Register* is a severe censure of the four archdeacons for their remissness in not coping more vigorously with this transgression of the Church's rule.‡

A more patent and persistent evil was clerical non-residence, which cropped up again and again throughout this episcopate. Not only the incumbents of remote and small places like Week

* *Register*, 176, 312, 360, 361, 442, 636, 662, 667, 671, 718.
† *Register*, 148, 152, 162, 174, 340, 667, 704, 718.
‡ *Register*, 147, 222, 342, 459, 740.

St Mary and Roborough, and St Peter Tavy and Monkokehampton, were charged with this neglect, but those of the more important Bodmin and Kilkhampton and Stoke Damarel, and others almost under the Bishop's eye, such as Silverton and Dunchideock and even his own Clyst St Michael (Sowton) and eight at one time in the city of Exeter itself. The usual procedure was an order to the absentee to return into residence within one month, with the threat of sequestration or excommunication or both in case of non-compliance; but besides this it was found necessary to call upon the archdeacons to prosecute enquiries as to the extent of the evil, and to take action thereon. Now a mandate would be addressed to the whole diocese, calling upon defaulters to amend; now a similar command would be issued to the Cornish clergy; and now one specially to neglectful incumbents of peculiars, who on one occasion were cited to appear in Exeter Cathedral, and on another had their emoluments sequestrated. But in spite of all, the abuse continued, and the Church suffered consequent loss during the whole of Brantyngham's time.* Leave of absence was easily obtained, the Bishop stipulating that suitable arrangements should be made for the performance of the clerical duties of the parish. The cause commonly assigned was the opportunity for study—generally at Oxford—but in a great number of cases permission was granted to enter the service of some great personage, clerical or lay; and, unlike his predecessor, Brantyngham usually limited the term of his licences to one year. Sometimes the cleric was allowed to be away for two years, and very occasionally for three; but quite exceptional was the permission to Rector Beaumont of Bideford, a Bachelor in Laws though only a subdeacon, who had leave of non-residence for seven years to study at Oxford or Cambridge.†

The Ordination records of the diocese during this episcopate, so carefully compiled, and preserved almost in their entirety, afford much information concerning the Church's work and condition at that period. The number of Ordina-

* *Register*, 166, 240, 321, 333, 334, 413, 419, 437, 508, 543, 562, 563, 570, 583, 610, 614, 677, 682; *Concilia*, Wilkins, III, 149.

† *Register*, 490.

tions was very large—no fewer than 295—Orders being conferred on as many as 36 dates in 1375, and 40 in 1381; but the great majority of these were merely the giving of the First Tonsure at various places visited by the Bishop while on tour in his diocese. The general Ordinations were held on the Saturdays in the Ember Seasons, usually about three times in the year, the most common centres being the Bishop's Chapel at Clyst, and that at Chudleigh, though a good many also were arranged in Exeter, St Mary Major's being the favourite church. Sometimes the number of candidates was very great, and Sowton must have presented an animated appearance on the eve of Trinity Sunday in 1372, when 449 persons were admitted to various Orders (23 priests, 35 deacons, 18 subdeacons, 34 acolytes, and 339 first-tonsured). In the great majority of cases the Bishop officiated in person, his London house proving useful when his secular duties kept him in Town, but on not a few occasions he took advantage of the help of an episcopal brother. His five first general Ordinations were taken for him at Tiverton by William Courtenay, Bishop of Hereford, who must have welcomed the opportunities that brought him back to his native county—for he was born in or near Exeter, being the fourth son of Hugh, Earl of Devon, and Tiverton Castle was one of the family seats. He came again a few years later, when he had been translated to London, to ordain 99 persons, this time at Cowick. Afterwards in 1384, being now Primate, he conducted four Ordinations at Exminster and Exeter at the time of his Metropolitical Visitation, of which we treat more fully elsewhere. Besides this diocesan Bishop, who paid merely occasional visits, John Ware or Warre, a Bishop *in partibus* (entitled Episcopus Cumanagiensis), who had been consecrated in 1354 and had frequently acted for Bishop Grandisson, was employed by his successor on divers occasions between 1373 and 1387, holding in his stead about a dozen general Ordinations in the diocese, and confirming, consecrating, and acting as confessor.*

The ordinands were very numerous, those admitted to the various Orders by the Bishop and the others who con-

* *Register*, II, xxxvi, 751-879; *Ch. of St Peter, Tiverton*, 14.

ducted his Ordinations numbering 894 priests, 891 deacons 931 subdeacons, 1,414 acolytes, and 4,335 first-tonsured. These give a total of 8,465, but the actual number of persons was much less, for many names figure several times in the lists as they passed on from Order to Order. Still, the fact remains that during this period of 24 years the ranks of the clergy of the diocese were augmented by the ordination of more than 4,300 persons (180 per annum) ; and that, though only one out of every three proceeded further than the first tonsure, and only one out of five first-tonsured went on to take Holy Orders, the roll of priests in the diocese received an annual acquisition of 37 on the average.*

One truly remarkable feature of these Ordination records is the very extensive influence in the Church that was enjoyed at that period by the Religious Houses. Scrupulous care was taken in the case of the three higher Orders to specify the title on which each person was ordained ; and we find that the overwhelming majority were either Regulars, or were serving benefices appropriated to abbeys, priories, or friaries. Indeed, those who were ordained for work in a secular benefice (*i.e.*, a parish or Collegiate Church that was not subject to a Religious House) numbered less than one-tenth of the whole. We get approximately the same proportion, whether we apply the test to the lists of priests or of deacons or of subdeacons, and this helps us to realize how widely the Religious Orders had extended their sway in England.

Another noteworthy feature—a sad one—is the number of instances of the admission to Orders of persons born out of wedlock. It was the rule that such should not be ordained without dispensations, and these cases are marked in the lists, almost all the dispensations being granted when the ordinands were given their First Tonsure. These occur so frequently as to indicate a loose state of morals, and this did not obtain among the laity only, for in not a few instances a candidate is stated to be the son of a priest and an unmarried woman.

* It should be stated that, in the above computations, it is taken as granted that the number of persons ordained by the Bishop of Exeter on Letters Dimissory from other diocesans is about the same as those ordained by others for him.

When we examine the register of institutions to benefices during this episcopate we are struck by the enormous number of exchanges that were arranged. The great majority of these were effected with incumbents of other dioceses, so that there was a large influx into the diocese of men from without, often from distant parts of England—a circumstance that must have conduced to the keeping of this remote and almost isolated region in touch with the outside world, and have checked the tendency to stagnation. This movement was very marked, for out of 740 institutions, as many as 325 new incumbents were instituted as the result of exchanges.* Thus many more institutions were due to exchanges than to any other reason, those consequent on deaths being only 261, and those on resignations being 138, while 7 were the result of deprivations. The number of resignations, too, was surprisingly great, rising to abnormal proportions in Brantyngham's last three years, doubtless owing to a recurrence of the Black Death in 1391 having left so many incumbents shattered in health, so that they found themselves unfitted to carry on their clerical duties. The same had happened, though not to so great a degree, in 1376 and in 1382, in which latter year the Archbishop, acting on instructions from the King, ordered special Masses and Litanies to be offered throughout his Province for deliverance from pestilence and sudden death and other evils. Furthermore, we notice that in Brantyngham's early years patrons experienced much difficulty in finding clergymen to fill small benefices, and consequently a number lapsed to the Bishop. The ranks of the ministry had been so frightfully depleted by the Black Death of 1349 and its return in 1361 that there were not enough incumbents for all parishes, and the unimportant or unattractive livings went begging. Additional evidence of this depletion is afforded by a dispensation, granted on papal authority by Cardinal Simon in London in 1372, allowing canons of Plympton Priory to be ordained priests in their twentieth year, " because as a result of the pestilence and mortality that have raged in those

* The total number of institutions recorded in this period is 909, but in 169 cases the cause of the vacancy is not stated.

parts, there is great lack of priests, and consequently the performance of the Church's services has been much reduced." It should be mentioned that all these figures mentioned above would have been somewhat larger, had it not been that the institution returns for more than two years (1389 and 1390) are lacking.*

That same calamity of the Black Death was indirectly the cause of a rise in clerical stipends. Archbishop Islip had been obliged to grant some concession, but his scale of six marks (£69) per annum for a parish priest and five (£57) for a chantry priest was now found to be inadequate, owing to the advance in prices and the scarcity of clergymen. Archbishop Sudbury therefore in 1379 issued a declaration stating that with the consent of his brother bishops of the Province of Canterbury he has fixed the emoluments of a parish priest at eight marks (£87), or board and four marks, and those of a chantry priest at seven marks (£76), or board and three marks. At the same time he ungraciously complained of the cupidity of the clergy, and, declaring that they must be content with this advance, he ruled that anyone who should presume to give or receive more, would be *ipso facto* excommunicate, and could only be absolved by his diocesan himself.†

A Clerical Subsidy Roll of Brantyngham's time (about 1379) serves as a useful indicator both of the amount of current clerical stipends, and also of the number of clerics at that period. The list comprises the archdeaconry of Totnes only, but includes regulars as well as seculars. From it we learn that there were then 121 incumbents, so that the supply of clergymen would seem to be fairly good, for the benefices then numbered about 139, leaving only 18 to be accounted for by pluralities and vacancies. There were besides these as many as 110 assistant parochial clergymen (capellani), and 68 clerici—probably parish clerks. Of the Religious there were 76—19 at Plympton Priory, 15 at Buckfast Abbey, 11 each at Tavistock and Torre Abbeys, 9 each at Buckland Abbey and Cornworthy Priory, and 1

* *Register*, 11-138, 263, 464.

† *Register*, 406.

each at Modbury and Totnes Priories. These latter figures show pretty clearly that the monastic life was not popular in that age, and it is very remarkable that the Priors of Modbury and Totnes had not one professed brother in either of their Houses.

The generality of benefices ranged from £8 (£130) downwards, Hennock being as low as 6s. 8d. (£5 5s. 8d.), and the incumbents of all of these were taxed at 2s. (32s. 7d.). But several were worth more, and were taxed at 5s. (£4 1s. 6d.), such as Bigbury, Lifton, Loddiswell, Milton Damarel, Moreton Hampstead, Sampford Courtenay, and Stoke Fleming, all of which had an income of £10 (£162). Aveton Giffard, worth £10 13s. 4d. (£174), Ashburton, Ashwater, and Bridestowe £12 (£196), Brixham and Paignton £13 (£212), Cornwood, Ermington, Holbeton, Holsworthy, Huish, and Modbury £13 6s. 8d. (£217), Ipplepen £18 (£293), and Yealmpton £20 (£326), were all taxed at 5s. too. Just a few were more valuable still—the "plums" of the archdeaconry—namely, Newton Ferrers, worth £26 13s. 4d. (£435), Stokenham £40 (£652), Ugborough £53 6s. 8d. (£872), and Plymouth £66 13s. 4d. (£1,086), the tax on the last being as high as 20s. (£16). Assistant curates all had to pay 2s., and clerks 4d. (5s. 5d.). Among the regulars by far the most lucrative post was that of Prior of Plympton, whose emolument reached the great sum of £160 6s. 8d. (£2,613), on which he was taxed 30s. (£24), and next to him came the Abbot of Torre with £73 6s. 8d. (£1,195). Buckfast and Tavistock and Totnes were respectively worth £55 17s. 4d. (£910) and £41 19s. 11d. (£684) and £33 15s. 4d. (£550). The Prior of Modbury received £26 13s. 4d. (£435), the Prioress of Cornworthy £16 (£261), and the Abbot of Buckland only £13 6s. 8d. (£217). Those over whom they ruled were taxed proportionately to the stipend of the ruler, a canon of Plympton or of Torre having to pay 1s. 8d. (27s. 2d.), while a monk of Buckland or a nun of Cornworthy was let off with 4d. (5s. 4d.).*

The episcopate of Brantyngham marks the turn of the tide in the fortunes and public favour of the Mendicant

* *Devon Notes and Queries*, IV, 271; VI, 17.

Orders in England. In the past they had done exceedingly valuable work, but their very popularity had begotten their downfall; for, there being no entrance examination, and ordination presenting no difficulty for them, men of little learning and of less character had crowded into their ranks in order to enjoy an easy life; and, though there were signal and noble exceptions, the general standard, both moral and intellectual, was now very low. By this time they had become almost universally unpopular—the bishops resented their independence of episcopal authority, the parochial clergy hated their intrusion in pulpit and confessional, the monks regarded them as too successful rivals, and the educated and religiously minded laity despised them for their ignorance and want of spirituality. They were therefore inveighed against by Wycliffe and his followers, and their deceitfulness and greed became the butt of Langland and Chaucer and other writers of the age.* The Exeter diocesan records show that, down to 1381, Franciscans, Dominicans, and Carmelites were freely licensed as public Confessors, sometimes in a deanery, sometimes in a whole archdeaconry, and sometimes throughout the diocese; and they were allowed to deal with all confessions except those cases reserved for the Bishop himself. We notice, however, that this Bishop, unlike his predecessor, is scrupulous after 1381 to avoid selecting any friars in his oft appointed or re-appointed Penitentiaries for the diocese, confining his choice to two or three secular priests for each deanery. And ten years later, when, as he did frequently, he granted formal permission to influential laymen to select their own Confessors, he made it a condition that no member of the Mendicant Orders should be chosen.†

Difficulty in this diocese first arose in 1380, when certain friars had been dealing with penitents without having obtained the Bishop's authority; and later (in 1384) a Dominican of Exeter had given Easter Communion to a parishioner of St George's without the leave and against the wishes of the parochial clergy, while other Mendicants had done the like

* G. G. Perry, I, 318, 419, 452.

† *Register*, 234, 239, 242, 332, 352, 355, 356, 357, 366, 374, 375, 439, 440, 722.

elsewhere and had also presumed to perform marriages and to administer Extreme Unction. A few years afterwards (in 1390), it was found that some friars had been abusing their authority and had been hearing confessions that ought to have been reserved for the Bishop or the Pope, and that others had falsely claimed to hold commission from the Bishop for such functions. Therefore notice was issued that the faculties granted to the Mendicants were revoked, and that henceforth they were not to act as penitentiaries.*

In what is usually known as Church Extension there was not much progress at this time. However, a new chapel, dedicated to the Holy Trinity, was built at Dartmouth, the Mayor and Corporation obtaining a licence for its use in 1370; and two years later the Bishop went down and consecrated it, including the cemetery the next day. The parishioners of Plymouth were granted leave in 1371 to hold services in St Katharine's Chapel on the Hoe, but were bound to attend their mother-church on Sundays and festivals. Sir Guy de Briene in 1374 founded a chantry-chapel of St Mary at Slapton, and endowed it with fifty marks a year for the support of six priests and four clerks. And in the same year the inhabitants of Sourton received permission to use a chapel there for all services, except that burials were to take place at the mother-church of Bridestowe.†

The custom of licensing chapels and oratories for the performance of services has been noticed before, and it was carried to great lengths by Bishop Brantyngham, who issued 314 such licences for separate individuals or bodies of persons. That figure by no means represents the total number, for not only were there many licences granted in previous times that continued in operation, but a great many of his were of a general scope, including oratories in several different places. For instance, one licence gave leave to all the Canons of Exeter to have private chapels both in their houses in the Close and on their farms, and there were numerous others that covered all the various estates belonging to a family. As an example of the wide application of this practice we may

* *Register*, 430, 534, 541, 711; *Concilia*, Wilkins, III, 147, 187.

† *Register*, 231, 238, 284, 345, 349.

mention the case of Tavistock, in which parish this Bishop licensed oratories for Abbot Cullynge in his abbey and on his manor at Morwell; Roger Milatone might have services in his newly erected chapel close to the parish church, and likewise the Milmete family in St James's Chapel at Milmete (Milemead); and two poor hermits, David Bukketorre and Robert Crese, were permitted to have Celebrations, the one in the Chapel of St John the Baptist, and the other in the Chapel of St Margaret, both near the town.*

In the parish of St Madron his Lordship licensed the Chapel of St Mary at Pensande (now the parish church of Penzance), and the Chapel of St Bridget and St Morveth at Morvah, and the Chapel of St Mary at Lanyon, and for the use of John Coulyn and his family an oratory in his manor of Trewrennen.† Again, at Dartmouth (then known as the parish of Townstal), besides the Corporation's Chapel of the Holy Trinity and the Chapel of St Clare, there were licensed oratories in the houses of Thomas Asshendene, Benedict Battyshale, John Hauley, and Richard Jule.‡ Such extension of religious privileges to private persons cannot but have had effect on the attendance at public worship in parish churches, and must to a considerable degree have emphasized the severance between the rich and the poor, instead of encouraging all to meet together in God's house—a circumstance that was not without its bearing on the political and civil troubles of that period of English history.

This episcopate was not marked by the building of new churches or the rebuilding of old ones, such work as was done being mostly the replacing of what was decayed by what was fresh and up-to-date, *i.e.*, work of late Decorated or early Perpendicular style. There are a few general references to a need of restoration. In his Visitation of 1381 the Bishop found many defects in the chancels and the furniture of North Devon churches; and, as another result of the same Visitation, he cited the Dean and Chapter to appear before him together with the vicars of certain of their appropriated

* *Register*, 231, 362, 440, 446, 499, 675, 732.

† *Register*, 348, 395, 428, 697.

‡ *Register*, 231, 247, 381, 625, 635, 660, 682.

churches, which were in a bad state of repair; and again, after his 1388 Visitation he complained that some incumbents failed to keep their fabrics in good order, and to restore them when they became ruinous. There is mention, too, of some specific cases, but these also are very few—the aisles and the central tower of St Crantock, the chancel of Colyton, and the chancel of Thornbury, were all dilapidated. But these instances are not suggestive of widespread and serious neglect; so that there seems to have been not much need for the employment of ecclesiastical architects and contractors.*

As for the Cathedral, Brantyngham on his arrival found a completed edifice, and there was little for him to effect in the church itself, save to substitute Perpendicular tracery for Bytton's great east window in the choir. Poor material must have been used for it originally, if it was decayed before a century had elapsed; but it is to be regretted that a judicious restoration was not attempted, instead of introducing the novel and fashionable style. However, so skilfully has the insertion been made, that the incongruity is jarring only to the architectural sensibility and not to the ordinary eye. Outside the church, however, the completion of an important undertaking had still to be accomplished, *viz.*, the cloisters. So solicitous was he about this task, that he issued orders that in all churches in the diocese the collections from the beginning of Lent till Low Sunday were to be given for this each year, till the work was finished, and forty days' indulgence was promised to those who should contribute by gift or by legacy. He succeeded in accomplishing practically the whole of this in his lifetime. Further, he was anxious that a library should be provided, and after his Visitation of 1387 he charged the Cathedral body to erect a suitable building, wherein they might fittingly preserve their literary treasures and provide for their being used by the members of their body.†

Bishop Brantyngham's other great undertaking for the benefit of his Cathedral was the provision of official residences

* *Register*, 379, 476, 486, 553, 627, 654.

† *Register*, II, xiii, 663, 713; Oliver's *Bishops*, 385-387; *Archit. Hist. of Ex. Cath.*, 88; *Notes and Gleanings*, I, 163.

for the Vicars Choral, twenty-four in number. For this purpose he erected suitable buildings in the western part of the Close, containing hall, chambers, kitchen, and other apartments, on a site known as the Kalendarhay, which took its name from an old guild or fraternity connected with the Cathedral. Hitherto, the Vicars had found themselves lodgings where they could, and, living thus away from their place of duty and among worldly distractions, they had become irregular in their attendance in the Cathedral ; so the Bishop, with the consent of the Canons, ordained that in future they were to reside in the College and take their meals together in the common hall. At first the Vicars were refractory or rebellious, possibly because they found their new quarters comfortless—for suggestive of this is the fact that a few years later £12 (£193) from the estate of the late William Gerveys was expended in building eighteen chimneys for the Kalendarhay. However, the Bishop charged the Dean and Chapter to employ coercive measures, and threatened excommunication against any disobedient Vicars, and then matters righted themselves. The dwellings have long since disappeared, but the beautiful and interesting mediaeval hall, either original or rebuilt, still stands intact, adjacent to South Street, and remains in the possession of the College of Vicars Choral.*

The one event of this episcopate, that was of exceptional interest, both within the diocese and without, was the opposition and strife engendered by the Metropolitical Visitation of Archbishop Courtenay in 1384. The only other occurrence of the kind known to Exeter history was that in the time of Archbishop Meopham, who was resisted by Bishop Grandisson, and had to retire without accomplishing his purpose. In that instance the Primate was a stranger, lacking local sympathy and support ; but now it was a different matter, for Courtenay was on his native soil, his family was the most famous and influential of all those of the county, his mother's residence was at Exminster, but four miles from the city, and only three miles further away was Powderham Castle, the seat of his nephew, the Earl of Devon.

* *Register*, 675 ; *Topog. of Ex. Cath. Close*, 44-57 ; Oliver's *Bishops*, 261.

The history of this famous case commences with a notice from the Archbishop, dated January 8th, 1384, announcing that on March 7th he would begin his Visitation of the Cathedral, city, and diocese of Exeter, and enclosing a Papal Letter of Urban VI, in which the latter, fourteen months before, had given him special authority to visit any diocese in his province within the term of two years. The Bishop forwarded the Mandate to the various officials, and on March 3rd wrote from Salisbury to his Grace to say that all were ready to receive him and to obey him in everything lawful and customary. The Metropolitan was to hold his formal Visitation of the Bishop in the Chapter-house on the first day, that of the Chapter following on the next day; but very strangely, though the Visitor was at hand, being entertained by his mother at Exminster, Brantyngham, for some unexplained reason, had not arrived, so the engagement had to be postponed for a week.

The Visitation of the rest of the diocese was committed to the Archbishop's Chancellor, Adam de Mottrum, who commenced with the Deanery of Christianity on March 17th, and steadily worked on through deanery after deanery until his part was finished on June 21st, Religious Houses being included in his course. Afterwards the Archbishop, who in his thoroughness had spent five weeks in enquiring into Cathedral matters, gave Cornwall a second benefit by devoting to it the month of August. But he and his Commissary had hardly commenced their task, when serious discord arose. It seems almost incredible that the Bishop did not know or had not informed himself of the nature of a Visitation and the powers of a Metropolitan; but, when he found that his own powers were temporarily suspended, he bitterly resented what he regarded as an intrusion, and issued a Mandate to his diocese, forbidding his people to render obedience to the Visitor. He was ready to allow to his superior the right of amending abuses and irregularities, but he protested that such matters as the instituting of incumbents and the proving of wills had always belonged to the Diocesan, and that the Archbishop was encroaching upon his rights by interfering in these his functions. A distressing quarrel arose, and

continued for more than three months; and the perplexed officials knew not whom to obey, being harassed by mandates and monitions and threats of excommunication from both prelates, each of whom also fulminated against transgressors who had dared to tear down his documents that he had affixed to the door of the Cathedral. Confusion reigned in the diocese, because of the difficulty of deciding whose episcopal deeds were to be recognised as valid, especially when, as sometimes happened, both had instituted an incumbent or proved a will; besides which, both were holding Ordinations simultaneously in different places. Both, too, appealed to the Pope for his adjudication—Brantyngham twice, and Courtenay once, though the appeal of the latter was not actually sent, as the end arrived just in time to stop its dispatch.

The crisis came on March 25th, when Archdeacon Bridham of Totnes and Canons Pylatone and Cheyne, acting on a commission from the Archbishop, rode out to Clyst in order to serve on the Bishop a citation to appear in person for the resumption of his examination, which was undeniably a right and canonical part of the Visitation. When however they reached the entrance gates of the Bishop's manor, they were beset on the high road by an armed crowd of his adherents, lay and clerical, who not only refused them passage, but declared that they would cut off the arm of anyone who should be so bold as to present any letter of citation. After vain attempts to effect an entry, the commissaries had to take to flight, pursued by their adversaries; who were so threatening, that the officials were fain to escape without being thrown into the river, or even losing their lives. They fled as far as Topsham—altogether out of their proper course—but there they were confronted by three of the ruffians, who took such drastic action as to compel the attendant, who carried the writ of citation, to tear it in pieces with his own hands, and to swallow the wax of the archiepiscopal seal that was appended to it. Of course this brought forth an excommunication from the insulted Primate, and a summons for the Bishop—this time served at his palace in Exeter, and proclaimed in the Cathedral and posted on its doors. But Brantyngham was not there, having withdrawn himself to

seek retirement, and perhaps counsel, at Salisbury or its neighbourhood, and he did not show his face again in his diocese for nearly two months.

Meanwhile Courtenay held undisputed sway, the absent diocesan making little attempt to exercise episcopal powers, beyond granting some Letters Dimissory for Ordination; and he was so happy as to obtain the support of the King, who seems to have been moved thereto by the sealing-wax incident. Evidently Brantyngham realized or was persuaded that he had taken up an indefensible position, for on his return he consented to meet the Archbishop in the Chapter-house and take part in the resumed Visitation; and a few days later (July 2nd) he submitted himself to his Metropolitan, confessing that he had acted wrongly, as had been made clear to him by an inspection of the muniments and registers of the Court of Canterbury, and therefore he humbly craved forgiveness.

Thus ended this unfortunate episode, which must have caused endless gossip in the diocese, and have presented to the world a sorry spectacle of the disunion and wranglings of two leading Christian prelates—with sad effects for the sacred cause of religion. There remained only the case of the three excommunicate perpetrators of the outrage. Some months afterwards they tendered their submission to the Archbishop, who granted them absolution on condition that they performed their set penance. This consisted in the payment of £1 (£16) each towards the repair of the walls of the city of Canterbury, the provision of a priest to say Mass for the Dead daily for one year in the Courtenay Chantry-chapel in Exeter Cathedral, and with bare heads each to carry a 3 lbs candle at the head of the procession on some high festival in each of the Cathedrals of Canterbury, London, and Exeter.*

Many and various were the duties of a bishop at that period, and Brantyngham had to act in divers capacities. Some of these were purely civil or political, concerned with the defence of the realm. In the closing years of the old

* *Register*, 511-518, 520, 530-541, 544-550; II, xiii-xxxv; *Concilia*, Wilkins, III, 183, 188, 189.

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King military matters were going badly on the Continent—so badly that after the retirement of the Black Prince there was alarm lest the victorious French should cross the Channel, and it was necessary that clerics should be enrolled as well as laymen to be ready to repel invaders. The military age was fixed at from sixteen to sixty, and detachments of ecclesiastics were to be mobilized by thousands and hundreds and twenties. There is extant a mandate of the Bishop of 1372 applying to Cornwall, which ordered that a beneficed cleric receiving a stipend of 10 marks (£110) was to come as a man-at-arms or an archer, one with £20 (£330) as a man-at-arms bringing with him two archers, one with £40 (£660) was to provide two men-at-arms and two archers, one with 100 marks (£1,100) three armed men and four archers, and one with £100 (£1,650) five men-at-arms and six archers. A Prior was in most cases expected to produce six men of each description. Again, when Edward III had been dead only a week, it was found necessary for his young grandson to prepare for war. The French were threatening to invade England, and were believed to have special designs on Exeter. So the Bishop was commanded by Richard II to constrain all the clergy of the city to contribute towards the repair of the walls and ditches ; and a month later he was ordered to see that all ecclesiastical persons in the diocese between the ages of sixteen and sixty, regulars and seculars alike, were armed and mustered, so as to be ready to go to resist the enemy, wheresoever in the kingdom they might be required. The failure of the poor attempts to retrieve the shattered fortunes of English rule in France led to a renewal of these preparatory measures three years later ; but happily it was not found needful to put to the test the military prowess of the clergy of the Exeter diocese, whose efforts were more fittingly exercised in the offering of special prayers for the war, when called upon, as was often the case, to do so by royal injunction.*

A few instances may be given of the exercise of episcopal

* *Register*, 186, 190, 199, 201, 202, 271, 299, 342, 421, 432, 639, 656.

discipline, as affording an insight into the condition of the diocese at this time.

At Davidstow a clerk named Baldwin Wylle had falsely assured the patrons that the absentee vicar, Robert Knyghte, was dead, and he had obtained for himself the presentation and had actually been instituted and taken possession. The Bishop, on being informed of the facts, appointed a commission to deal with the case; but though the lawful vicar died meanwhile, the patrons refused to recognise the intruded incumbent, and the assistant curate, Thomas Bernarde, was appointed, and held the benefice till his death twenty-two years later.*

Gross irregularity was laid to the charge of William Maryman, who, while only a deacon, had presumed to go through the form of celebrating Mass. He had afterwards been admitted to priest's Orders, and, without obtaining absolution for his error, had proceeded to exercise his priestly office. On his making confession of the wrong, and doing penance, he was shriven by the Bishop. A somewhat cognate case was that of Canon Merchman of Hartland, who was guilty of personally assaulting his Abbot, whereby *ipso facto* he came under the ban of excommunication; but, being ignorant of ecclesiastical law, he had unwittingly transgressed by continuing to celebrate, as if there was no obstacle to stop him. On his humble submission, he was instructed to make amends to his Abbot and to perform penance, and then received dispensation.†

Many were the troubles that arose concerning churches and their services. Frequent complaints were brought to the Bishop of disturbances in Tiverton Church, where some of the parishioners and others were wont to congregate during the various services, even on high festivals, and insult the Almighty and distract the congregation by worldly and even foul conversation and all kinds of noise. So serious was this matter—for public worship was very greatly interfered with—that a lengthy rescript was sent from Londor

* *Register*, 167, 170.

† *Register*, 709, 710.

by his Lordship, threatening ecclesiastical penalties against the offenders.*

The ban of excommunication was the one punishment that the Church could inflict; but it is rather lamentable, as a symptom of deterioration, to notice how commonly a bishop resorted to this method in dealing with offences that were not really heinous, thus degrading in the eyes of the world one of the most solemn offices of the Church. Sometimes the cause was a merely personal one, affecting the Bishop himself, as when trespassers damaged the fences of his park at Crediton, or when the Prior of Tywardreath failed to pay him some money that was owing; or, perhaps, some persons were defaulters with regard to the tenth that had been voted for the King, or his yearly subsidy, and fulminations were issued against them through the agency of the archdeacons. On more than one occasion complaint arose because rubbish had been shot in the Close, and the place, where lay the bodies of the dead, had been used for the vilest purposes, so that the way was too filthy for processions to pass along—a nasty offence indeed, but hardly demanding the most extreme of penalties. But most absurdly trivial was the petition of the Rector of St Mary Major's, who must have been a very prosaic person, or one quite incapable of disciplining naughty boys; for he applied to the Lord Bishop for a remedy, because some "sons of iniquity, who had no fear of God before their eyes and were heedless of their own salvation," had entered his church and stolen some young pigeons, presumably from nests in the tower, together with other unspecified trifles. The Bishop, also, seems to have been devoid of the sense of humour, for he sent his formal mandate to the Rural Dean and the incumbents of the city, charging them solemnly to warn the malefactors once, twice, and a third time, that they turn from their evil ways and compensate the Rector within fifteen days, else the sentence of the greater excommunication is to be pronounced against them.†

At Tavistock, too, there occurred a case in which the sense of proportion appears to have been altogether lost.

* *Register*, 631.

† *Register*, 334, 341, 616, 623, 625, 637, 677, 688.

One of the monks, Thomas Wyndout, so far forgot his duty to his Abbot as to smite him a blow on the chest. For this he was summoned before the Bishop, and, when he denied it, a Canon of Crediton and the Rector of Ashwater were deputed to hold a court of enquiry and to report. As a result, the Bishop wrote to inform the Abbot that he had excommunicated his assailant, whose sentence was to be published in the Abbey, and that the question of his absolution had been referred to the Pope; but meanwhile, if the monk should be in danger of dying, the Abbot would be acting rightly in absolving him. However, there was no necessity for this, for we meet with the same man two years later, when he himself was the victim of a more serious assault, for which the perpetrators had in like manner to be banned.*

While the pronouncing of the sentence of excommunication became more common, so too did the granting of indulgences. As before, so now we light upon such grants for the encouragement of useful works and philanthropic institutions—the restoration of bridges at Clyst and Buckfast, and the support of the lazar-houses at Honiton, Pilton, Plymouth, Taddiport, Tavistock, and Totnes. Those who visit Sticklepath Chapel or St Teath Church and contribute to its restoration are to have respectively 20 or 40 days; but the 40 days' indulgence in connection with St Mary Magdalene's Chapel at Launceston introduces a new feature, for it was conditional on attendance at early Mass there, and the offering of prayers for the peace and well-being of the Church and State, and for King Richard, the late King Edward, the Black Prince, and others. Another extension of the system was the offer of 40 days' indulgence to all who should merely say a Pater-noster and an Ave for the soul of Nicholas Taverner, a former Mayor of Exeter, or for the soul of Lady Muriel Dynham, whose body was buried in Hartland Abbey. A pleasing novelty was a similar offer to all who should lend a helping hand for the redemption from captivity of five sailors, who had been taken by the French and were held as prisoners.†

The series of outrages that we noticed during Grandisson's

* *Register*, 679, 680, 738.

† *Register*, 338, 340, 341, 344, 346, 347, 351, 426, 428, 433, 448.

long episcopate seems to have grown in intensity and number in Brantyngham's time; and it is shocking to find how little respect was shown to spiritual persons and sacred places, and that even many ecclesiastics were guilty of crimes of violence. There were several cases of murder. A cleric from the diocese of Lincoln, aspiring to become Provost of Glasney College, mortally wounded Reginald Calle, the holder of that post. Another Cornish priest was seized by ruffians, who tied his hands behind his back, and then barbarously cut off his head. William Torre, Vicar of Dean Prior, was enticed out of his house in the night and cruelly slain. Almost as bad was the treatment of John Calestoke, priest, who with inhuman savagery was tied up to a cross that stood by a public road near Penryn; or the foul and horrible mutilating of John Pypard, a Plymouth priest, and of Henry de Swynforde, a priest and monk of Totnes. Not even Exeter Cathedral was sacrosanct, for when a man had fled thither for sanctuary, Sir John Dynham forced his way in, broke open a door, and after a fierce fight with bloodshed, dragged him out; and likewise John Caynoke, Vicar of Dawlish, was arrested in the same place and haled off to prison. If in the chief church of the diocese John Durant, Rector of Combe-in-Teignhead, could not escape being seriously wounded, it is not to be much wondered at that the Dean of St Crantock and other ministers were seized, as they were engaged in public worship, and taken out to be maltreated. But very astonishing was the conduct of Abbot Cullynge of Tavistock, who one Sunday led a band of a dozen of his own men into Tavistock Church, where they found David Baggetorre, assistant curate, sitting quietly; and, having attacked him with their swords and hurled him to the ground, they cast him out of the sacred building. Such instances as these, and many others that might be mentioned, are clear proof that this was a rough and lawless age, and that religion had little or no influence over many men in the diocese.*

Bishop Brantyngham died at Clyst on December 3rd, 1394; and his body, in accordance with his own wishes, was entombed in the north part of the nave of the Cathedral

* *Register*, 148, 150, 158, 335, 336, 466, 489, 620, 626, 656, 657.

before the altar of the Holy Trinity, which he had himself erected there, but which has long since been destroyed.

His will, like that of his predecessor, is interesting, as showing the large sums of money that prelates of that age allotted for their obsequies. Composing it a year before his death, he ordained that every ecclesiastic present should have a gratuity, ranging from 3s. 4d. (£2 13s. 8d.) for a canon down to 6d. (8s.) for a choir-boy, and also more for those who should attend the memorial services of the following thirty days, similar arrangements being made for funeral offices performed for him at Crediton and Ottery St Mary; and there was to be a general distribution of alms to the poor who should be present at his interment, each one receiving a penny (1s. 4d.) at least. He enjoined, too, that around his corpse, which was to be set between four 5 lbs candles, should stand twenty-four poor men, clad in black, each holding a great torch of 10 lbs weight, while 100 more were to sit or stand around them, each of the former receiving 6d. (8s.), and the latter 4d. (5s. 4d.). There were generous doles to the inmates of all the hospitals in the diocese, and 3s. 4d. (£2 13s. 8d.) for food to each prisoner in Exeter, with the further proviso that everyone in the diocese incarcerated for debt should have his freedom paid for, if his liabilities were less than £5 (£80).

With the exception of £40 (£644) to his nephew Richard Brantyngham, and personal gifts to his former adversary, Archbishop Courtenay, and to the Bishops of Winchester (Wykeham) and Bath and Wells, there was scarcely anything for relations and friends; but he richly remembered his dependents, and also the churches with which he had been officially connected—Hereford and Exeter Cathedrals, the incumbencies that he had held, and the chapels on his extra-diocesan manors. He left handsome legacies to some of the principal Collegiate Churches in his diocese—vestments to Glasney and Ottery St Mary, 100 marks £1,073) for new buildings at Crediton, and £20 (£322) for the restoration of the tower at St Crantock; but it is noteworthy that he left nothing to any Houses of monks or friars, save that each foundation of the Mendicants was to have £2 (£32) as fees

for memorial services for him. The bequeathing of a set of vestments or 50s. (£40) to Brantyngham Church is evidence of his undying affection for his family home and the place of his birth.*

The next diocesan was a man of aristocratic connections, being descended from two Staffordshire baronial families, the de Staffords and the Bassets. His great uncle Ralph had been created Earl of Stafford as a reward for lengthy service in the French wars; his father's first cousin, Ralph de Stafford, had married a scion of the royal family; and he himself was second cousin of three brothers, who succeeded one another in the earldom. It was therefore only to be expected that he should be advanced to high position, and, after serving as Rector of Worthen in Salop, he was promoted to prebendal stalls at Lichfield, Lincoln, and York. All of these he was holding, as well as the deanery of York, in 1395, at the time of his appointment to Exeter by a papal provision of Boniface IX, who thereby ousted the Dean and Chapter from their proper right of election.†

Save in one respect the Pope's choice proved to be a wise one; for, though his episcopate was in no way specially remarkable, Edmund de Stafford was a man of good life and an efficient administrator, and the Church in his diocese seems to have prospered during his rule. The one exception however was important—he was very much of an absentee. Of course it was only the fashion of those times; but to us it appears lamentable that he could not have chosen to devote himself to the service of either the Church or the State, instead of holding office concurrently as Bishop of Exeter and as Chancellor under Richard II and again under Henry IV. As a scandalous result, he did not even visit his diocese until nearly five years after his consecration; and then, after only nine months of work, he returned to London for another spell of secular office, which lasted for considerably over two years. It causes regret, but no wonder, that from time to time he found himself unable to attend to details of diocesan work, "on account of pressure of business touching

* Wills P.C.C., Rous, 4; *Register*, 742-749.

† *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, LIII, 445.

the King and the Realm." The evil was all the more pronounced, inasmuch as his episcopal activities in great measure ceased for the last five years of his life, from the time when he reached the age of seventy; so that, counting other absences from home, his working-time in his diocese extended over only ten and a half of his twenty-four years.*

However, he made endeavour to perform his functions by deputy. Ralph Tregrisiou, the Dean, and Robert Rygge, the Chancellor of his Cathedral, were deputed to act as Vicars General respectively during his two sojourns in London, and he employed as many as six assistant-bishops, each for a short period. In his earlier years he had help from two Irish bishops, Henry Tyrlaw of Annaghdown (1395, 1398), and Henry Nony of Ardagh (1396-1398); in 1402 he commissioned Bishop Greenlaw of Aberdeen to perform some of his episcopal functions; and near the end of his life he obtained the services of William Yeurde (1414-1416), Bishop of Solubriae, who at the same time was also Suffragan of Winchester and of Salisbury and Rector of Torrington, and of Richard, Bishop of Caithness (1417-1419), and William, Bishop of Caithness (1419).†

When in his diocese, Stafford was very much of a stay-at-home Bishop, his dealings with his clergy and people being mostly confined to correspondence by letter, or to personal interviews at his manor at Clyst, or, less frequently, at Exeter, Crediton, or Chudleigh. His personal acquaintance with the more distant parts of his diocese was chiefly limited to Visitation tours, accomplished with lightning rapidity, when he spent one night in each place, held an Ordination, and then travelled on a long distance to his next lodging place. Extraordinary were his feats of horsemanship, and splendid must have been his endowment of strength and endurance. Even in winter-time he achieved the journey to Town (170 miles) with only two nights on the way (he was at Clyst on January 20th, 1401, and in London on the 22nd); in June of 1406 he left London on the 13th, and reached Crediton on the 15th, and was back again on the 23rd; and

* *Register*, 54, 242.

† *Register*, viii, xiv, 6, 53, 89, 93, 230, 332, 425-428.

he maintained his fitness almost to the end, for at the age of seventy-two he took his farewell of the Capital on July 8th, and on the 10th arrived at his home at Clyst, where he spent almost the whole of the closing three years of his life. To such a man the difficulties of travel in his extensive diocese would be insignificant, and even our modern Bishops may well marvel at his records. Thus, in May of 1411 he set out from Crediton, and on successive days visited these places, holding an Ordination at each—Ashburton, Paignton, Totnes, Paignton again, Kingsbridge, Plympton, Plymouth, Tavistock, Holsworthy, Hartland, and Hatherleigh. And in the autumn he made a tour in Cornwall, including visits (with Ordinations at all except Helston) to Cuddenbeak (St German's, on Sept. 30th), Liskeard (Oct. 1st), Lostwithiel (Oct. 2nd), Grampound and Truro (Oct. 3rd), Penryn (Oct. 4th), Helston (Oct. 7th), Marazion (Oct. 8th), Lelant (Oct. 9th), Redruth (Oct. 10th), Mitchell (Oct. 11th), Pawton (Oct. 12th), Bodmin (Oct. 14th), Lanteglos-by-Camelford (Oct. 15th), and Lawhitton (Oct. 16th).

It is noticeable that this Visitation was practically an Ordination tour, comparable to the Confirmation rounds of modern days ; and such was the case with his other Visitations—one in West Devon and Cornwall in 1400, and smaller ones in North Devon, in South Devon, and in Cornwall in 1405. No doubt he held Confirmations at the same time, but there could be but little opportunity for personal interviews with clergy and Church workers and laity ; and to the bulk of his flock the Bishop must have been an unknown person, even so much as seen only by comparatively few.

The Ordinations numbered 323 (besides some undistinguished admissions to First Tonsure in the spring of 1409), 193 of which were taken by the Diocesan, who however left most of such functions in his last five years to be performed by his deputies. It is remarkable that Exeter was almost entirely left out in the selection of places. True, an annual Ordination was held in St Mary Major's during the first four years of the Bishop's absence, and later he himself held three in his Palace ; but the Cathedral was not used for this purpose, except once in 1418, when a Suffragan ordained in

the Lady Chapel. The most usual place, besides Clyst, was Crediton, whose Collegiate Church took the place of the Cathedral in this respect.

The ordinands were very numerous—nearly 800 were ordained priests for the diocese (including 116 on Letters Dimissory to other Bishops), and deacons and subdeacons were each nearly as numerous. Those admitted to Orders by First Tonsure numbered about 2,700, and acolytes were nearly half as many. It is very noteworthy that the great majority of those ordained to the three higher Orders were regulars, or took their titles from Religious Houses, secular clergy being but few.

The old evil of incumbents being in Minor Orders continued, and also the same freedom of granting licences for non-residence, generally for study at Oxford. The latter often occurred in an exaggerated form, as when a Rector of Uffculme had leave to be away for 5 years and his successor for 9½; and the like happened at Plymtree, where one had 12 years and the next 3 years; while three successive Rectors of Bridestowe had 10 years between them. Their parishioners must have suffered religiously and spiritually; as also those of Silverton, who lost their Rector for 12 years; and of Bondleigh and Lympstone and St Cleer, who had no incumbents for 10 years; and of Atherington and Cheriton Bishop and Ruan Lanihorne, whose pastors were absent for 9 years. At Combe Martin, too, Church work was interfered with to a singular degree, for during this one episcopate it had four rectors, who had leave of absence respectively for 1 year, 3 years, 2 years, and 1 year.

Another common feature of that age was the shortness of the tenure of incumbencies. There is a danger of stagnation and of want of life, when long terms of office are the normal condition; but in Bishop Stafford's time institutions were very frequent, as many as 450 parishes having at least one change, and numbers having a new rector every four or five years on an average. In some, vacancies occurred even more often, for Chulmleigh and St Columb Major and All Hallows'-on-the-Walls at Exeter had each ten incumbents in this episcopate of twenty-four years, Poltimore had eight, and there

were seven at Alphington, Bicton, Bridestowe, Clyst Fomison (Sowton), Clyst St Lawrence, St Stephen's in Exeter, Roborough, and St Cleer. Many of these vacancies were caused by exchange, which was very much in vogue, and affected not only parochial cures, but also canonries and even archdeaconries. Higher officials, however, were wont to hold their honourable appointments in plurality, some even piling up a number of dignities, like Hugh Hickelyng, Precentor of the Cathedral, who was allowed at the same time to hold canonries at Exeter, Crediton, and St Crantock; and William Langeton, who would not be likely to suffer from *ennui* in his very remote rectory at South Pool, if he regularly occupied his stalls at Exeter, Crediton, Ottery St Mary, and Bosham.*

Assistant curates (known then as chaplains) were liable to a sort of ecclesiastical conscription, and were not in a position to reject a proffered post, if accompanied by a sufficient stipend. The Register cites other like instances at Goodleigh, Milton Damarel, Morchard Bishop, and Torrington, but that at Bridestowe is a typical case :—" Robert Franke was offered by John Weston, Rector of Bridestowe, a competent salary to serve the parish church there; but he refused the work, and the said Rector appealed to the Bishop for a remedy. Accordingly a Commission was issued, directed to the Dean of Tavistock and to Henry, Rector of Lydford, William Hawke, Chaplain of Sourton, and John Bydelake, literate, to warn the said Robert three several times that he proceed within ten days to the work at Bridestowe on pain of suspension." If he refused to submit, he was to appear in person before the Bishop at Clyst.† As regards stipends in general, the clergy seem to have been better provided for than had been the case in past times, though there is extant a curious complaint of poverty, issued from the graduates of Oxford and Cambridge, because by the Statute of Provisors (re-enacted more stringently in 1390) they were hindered from accepting benefices from the Pope by provision, as they had been wont to do before.‡

* *Register*, 130, 234.

† *Register*, 106, 115, 257, 259, 372.

‡ *Register*, 311.

As to clerical discipline and morals, conditions appear to have been satisfactory on the whole. There certainly were some immoral clergymen, but apparently not many, though the Religious were not so free from guilt as the parochial clergy; and the transgressions were mostly those against chastity, while drunkenness happily finds no place in the calendar of crimes. Acts of personal violence, indeed, were of frequent occurrence; but the transgressors were generally laymen or women, and the Church had to take cognisance of them only when a church or churchyard had been polluted by the shedding of blood in some quarrel. When such an event was reported to have happened, the edifice or cemetery was disused, until a Commission, appointed by the Bishop, had investigated the evidence; and if it was found that there had been no bloodshed, the ban was removed forthwith; otherwise, a formal reconciliation had first to be pronounced. The Close at Exeter, Lifton, St Germoe, Tiverton, and Uffculme were so dealt with; but Fremington, Lostwithiel, Totnes, and others were declared to be free from pollution. Sometimes at least, as at Cury in 1395, special arrangements were made for the use of a chapel for the usual services during the closing of the parish church owing to its temporary desecration.*

A curious record of the exercise of discipline in connection with such a case is preserved concerning one Robert Rychard of Chittlehampton, who murderously assaulted Oliver Lange in Filleigh Church, shedding his blood and so polluting the sacred edifice, and at the same time incurring the sentence of the greater excommunication. He therefore appeared before the Bishop at Crediton, and prayed for absolution, which was granted, but conditionally on his submitting to such penance as the Chancellor of the Diocese, William Hunden, might appoint. He had consequently to refund to the parishioners their expenses for the reconciliation of their church; and, clad only in shirt and trousers (in midwinter), he had to be driven three times with the castigation of cudgels through the market-place at South Molton, and also through Filleigh Church, carrying a wax candle of half

* *Register*, 78, 106, 114, 242, 246, 314, 349, 351, 360.

a pound weight, which at the end of the ordeal he was to hand to the priest during High Mass in the said church.*

Defiance of ecclesiastical regulations sometimes caused a church to be laid under an interdict. Axminster suffered in this way, because a stranger, who had declared himself to be a chaplain, but had no permission from the Bishop, had been allowed to preach therein, with the consequence that the place was banned for eleven days. A similar event happened at South Pool, where the parishioners were guilty of a like infraction of rules by permitting an unlicensed secular clergyman to occupy the pulpit; but, as they had erred through ignorance and not of intention, the Bishop graciously cancelled the interdict. To us it would appear a small reason for causing serious inconvenience to the parishioners, but at that period there was a marked readiness to inflict this kind of ecclesiastical punishment. Thus an interdict was issued against Landkey Church in 1410 because of a clandestine marriage of two Barnstaple persons, performed by one who was said to be an Augustinian Friar of Bristol.†

A good deal was done in the way of Church extension at this time, but it took the form of the building of chapels rather than of churches. A few of the latter indeed were erected or re-erected during Stafford's episcopate, but these were merely renewals. Broad Hempston Church, which was an unsatisfactory structure to start with, had become ruinous; so the parishioners petitioned the Bishop to sanction their rebuilding it on a larger scale in another part of the churchyard. To this he consented, making it a condition that the work should be completed within two years; and so zealously did they apply themselves to the task, that in less than a year the edifice was ready for use and was licensed (1401). In Exeter the Church of the Holy Trinity was re-erected in 1404; and at Woodbury the Lord Bishop consecrated in 1409 the rebuilt parish church of St Swithun, and the following day that in the adjoining parish of Lympstone, and in 1412 the new Church of St Thomas of Canterbury in the suburbs of

* *Register*, 103.

† *Register*, 10, 233, 334.

Exeter. The ancient Chapel of St Thomas, standing at the end of Exe Bridge, had been swept away by a flood; and therefore the parishioners and the Prior and monks of Cowick, who were the patrons, united in the undertaking of providing a successor, using for the site some conventual property situated at a safe distance from the river, and this new building became the parish church. Furthermore, Bradworthy in 1395 and Buckland Brewer in 1399 had both been destroyed by lightning, and Down St Mary had fallen into ruins by natural decay in 1413; so the Bishop issued Indulgences to the faithful to encourage them to restore those churches, the parishioners being too poor to do so by themselves. Besides these, the Chapel of the Holy Trinity at Exmouth was licensed for use in 1412 on account of the distance of the people from Littleham, though on Sundays and festivals they were to attend their mother-church. At Plymouth the Chapel of St Katharine on the Hoe had become dilapidated (1413), and therefore the Bishop aided the effort to repair it by the issue of an Indulgence; as he also did for the Chapel of the Blessed Virgin Mary at Mousehole near Penzance, which had been useful as a guide for vessels entering the narrow harbour, but had been destroyed by the sea (1414).*

An interesting case was that of Kingsbridge, where had sprung up a township in the parish of Churchstow, from whose church it was distant not quite a mile and three quarters as the crow flies. The inhabitants presented to the Bishop a petition, asking that he would consecrate their Chapel of St Edmund and also the churchyard as a burial-ground. The former was an old building and had for long been used for services, but for interment they had to carry their dead all the way to Churchstow; and not only did this make too great a demand on the time of their men, many of whom were sailors or tradesmen or artisans, but Kingsbridge "stood in a valley near the sea-shore, and a long way from the said parish church, which was built on the summit of a lofty mountain (in cacumine montis excelsi), the road to it, along which funerals had to pass, being by a long and tedious ascent of the said mountain, both dangerous and

* *Register*, 35, 38, 42, 73, 86, 100, 248, 260, 295, 371.

difficult." His Lordship, having consulted the Rector, the Abbot and Convent of Buckfast, on whose land the chapel was built, and the Dean and Chapter of Exeter, satisfied himself that all the statements in the petition were true. He therefore travelled down to Kingsbridge (his last visit to any place in his diocese apart from Clyst and Crediton and Exeter), and consecrated the church on August 26th, 1414, and the churchyard on the following day. Much in the same way the people of Kingston in 1402 had gained for themselves the consecration of their Chapel of St James with its burial-ground, being within the parish of Ermington.*

A somewhat similar case was that of St Uny Lelant, a delightful example of the value set by laymen on Church ministrations. Divers of the parishioners complained to the Bishop that they resided two, three, or even four miles from their parish church of Lelant, "the roads being mountainous and rocky, and liable in winter to sudden inundations, so that they could not safely attend divine service, or send their children to be baptized, their wives to be purified, or their dead to be buried; with the result that it often happened that their babes were unbaptized and the sick died without the last sacraments." At their own expense they had built two chapels—St Tewennoc's and St Ia's—with grounds enclosed, suitable for burials, and these they petitioned the Bishop to consecrate. This was in 1409, but difficulty arose with the Vicar, which led to delay, and for some reason it was thought needful to obtain Bulls from Popes Alexander V and John XXIII. However, after the lapse of more than two years, when the Bishop was on tour in Cornwall, he fitted in a day's visit to Lelant on his way from Marazion to Redruth, and not only held an Ordination there, but also licensed the two chapels for divine service. He granted burial rights to the latter, now known as St Ives, but not to the former (Towednack), whose cemetery was not consecrated till Bishop Veysey's time in 1542.†

It is very illuminating to notice how great was the number of chapels in those days. A large proportion of these were

* *Register*, 227, 229.

† *Churches of W. Cornwall*, 119; *Register*, 239.

private oratories in manor-houses or rectories or elsewhere, and as many as 365 licences for such were granted by Bishop Stafford. Even this, however, does not represent the full tale, for it was by no means uncommon for him to give to a squire permission for the holding of services in such inclusive terms as these :—" To John Basset in all his mansions within the diocese," or " To Thomas Arundell and Margery his wife in all their mansions in Cornwall."* At the beginning of the fifteenth century, in addition to the parish church and the abbey, the extensive parish of Hartland, measuring eight miles by seven, had seven chapels for the convenience of the people in divers parts. Four centuries later the Church of England was represented by the parish church only, and even that was not in a central position, but a mile and a half distant from the town. Some attempt was made to meet the needs of Church people by building a chapel-of-ease in the town in 1838 and a mission chapel in a country district in 1910 ; but, meanwhile, the Nonconformists have for long been imitating the policy of the mediaeval Church, and have provided seven places of worship in various localities. Similarly, in other parishes the people in olden times were encouraged and helped to engage in public and private devotions by having a chapel within reach. Very many parishes had one or two besides the parish church, and a considerable number had more—Bratton Clovelly, St Sithney, and St Uny Lelant had three each, Heavitree and Padstow had five, and Tiverton and Launceston had six.

We examine one deanery—the Barnstaple Deanery is a fair sample—in order that we may compute the structural provision that was made in town and country by the generous piety of our forefathers for the exercise of their religion. There are now in the deanery of Barnstaple 24 parish churches, 10 public chapels, and 1 Workhouse chapel—a total of 35 places where worship is offered at altars. Within the same area in pre-Reformation times there were 20 parish churches, and at least 35 chapels (probably more). The latter were as follows. In Barnstaple there were the Priory Church of St Mary Magdalene, the Chapel of St Salphin in the Castle,

* *Register*, 270, 271.

St Anne's Chapel in the Cemetery, the Chantry Chapel of St Thomas of Canterbury by the bridge, the Chapel of St Nicholas on the quay, the Chapel of All Saints over the East Gate, and the Chantry Chapels of Our Lady and of St Nicholas in the parish church; and besides, the leper-house was licensed for services, and licences were granted by Bishop Stafford to Isabella Bydewell and to Walter Lane for oratories in their houses, and similarly by Bishop Lacy to Alice White. In Atherington was the Chapel of the Holy Trinity at Umberleigh. In Bishop's Tawton the Bishops of Exeter had a chapel on their manor, and William Fouke had an oratory in his mansion of Pill House. Braunton had the Chapel of St Anne above the village (possibly never taken into use), and St Anne's Chapel at Saunton. At Fremington was a chapel named after St Katharine. In Georgeham Thomas Rayschelegh had an oratory in his house at Hole and Henry Talbot one at Pytwyll; in Heanton Punchardon were a Chantry of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and a chapel in William Beaumond's mansion of Heanton, and the Rector had an oratory in his house; in Ilfracombe were the Chapel of St Nicholas by the harbour and the Chapel of St Windred at Lee; in Instow was an oratory at Huish, Richard Hankford's house; in Marwood there was a chapel at Whitefield, and an oratory at Merwode, the house of Walter Merwode; in Mortehoe there was in the church the Chantry of St Katharine and St Mary Magdalene; in Pilton there were the Priory Church, St Lawrence's Chapel at Raleigh, St Margaret's Hospital for lepers, and an oratory in Pyllond, the seat of Thomas Pyllond; and in Tawstock was St Lawrence's Chapel, and the Rector, Walter Gybbes, had an oratory in his house.

The mention of leper-houses leads us to remark that that awful scourge, so prevalent in England in the Middle Ages, prompted the charity of our predecessors to found lazar-houses or hospitals for lepers in most cities and towns. In Devonshire at this time we find mention of such at Exeter, Honiton, Crediton, Barnstaple, Pilton, Torrington, Tavistock, Totnes, Plympton, and Plymouth, and in Cornwall at Bodmin, and this list is by no means exhaustive.

It is worth while to advert to three phases of the exercise of our Bishop's jurisdiction in the regulating of his diocese, using the authority of his office for solving difficult problems that presented themselves.

Divers places found by experience that their Dedication Festival occurred at an inconvenient season. Sometimes it was shorn of part of its glory, because it fell in Lent or was out-rivalled by some great festival of the Calendar; or perhaps the men of the parish were required to be at work, because it was a busy time on the land. In such exigencies the Bishop was approached, and he readily transferred the feast to a more suitable date, October or December being generally chosen as free months. Thus, the festival at South Molton was changed from the Second Sunday in Lent to October 10th, that at Menheniot from March 8th to October 2nd, that at Witheridge from March 4th to July 16th, that at Molland from September 8th to October 3rd, that at Launceston Priory from within the octave of the Assumption to October 22nd, that at St John's Hospital in Exeter from St Lambert's Day (September 17th) to the second Sunday after St Cosmas and St Damian's Day (September 27th), that at Fen Ottery Chapel from St Gregory's Day (March 12th) and that at Upton Hellions from December 7th to December 10th.*

Again, the Bishop frequently exercised his dispensing power when some irregularity had been committed contrary to ecclesiastical law, especially if investigation proved that the perpetrators had acted in ignorance of the wrong. Perhaps it was discovered that some young man had been ordained to the diaconate or the priesthood before he had reached the canonical age, or had been ordained by some other Bishop without Letters Dimissory; or that a candidate for admission to Orders was of illegitimate birth; or that two persons had been married, who were related in the fourth degree of consanguinity, *i.e.*, were first cousins. In such cases the Bishop was lenient, and generally had no scruple in granting a Dispensation.

A third contingency in which he wielded the power of

* *Register*, 96, 101, 237, 254, 258, 334, 361, 370.

the keys was when the faithful needed to be encouraged or incited to the performance of some good work, secular or sacred, and it appeared that this could be effected by the granting of an Indulgence—a declaration that the time to be spent in Purgatory would be shortened by some stated period, often forty days. The causes that drew forth these Indulgences were very various. A common one, as in previous generations, was the building or repairing of bridges, and such undertakings at Staverton, Holne, Lee by Plympton, Horrabridge, and Looe were helped on by this means; as also the reconstructing of two towers and a causeway at Plymouth, which had recently been almost destroyed by foes hailing from Brittany; and roads, too, had to be remade—one between Ivybridge and Plympton, Lynchlane near Plympton, a road leading from Plymouth to Smapolemille, and another from Plymouth to Tamerton, which was declared to be so deep in mud as to be actually perilous for passengers and workmen alike. Hospitals in foreign lands and leper-houses at home—at Tavistock and Pilton—were thus aided; as well as John Elys of Essex, who on a previous occasion had been hindered by evil-disposed persons, while fleeing to Exeter Cathedral for sanctuary, and who had now lost his houses and all his property by a disastrous fire, so that he had nothing left for the support of his wife and children. An Indulgence was granted to the faithful who should contribute to the support of a priest to minister at the altar of the Holy Cross in Tiverton Church, and another for those who would pray for the soul of Canon John Mychel, whose body was interred in the south aisle of the Cathedral, before the image of St Michael the Archangel. Indulgences were offered as an inducement to subscribe to the expenses of church building, as we have seen, a typical instance being that of St Crantock, where the tower had fallen, and had caused extensive damage to the nave. Of course, the Cathedral must not fail to share in the benefit, and, together with the issue of an Indulgence for all who should contribute to its completion, decoration, and maintenance, the Bishop published his command that in every church in the diocese collections should be taken annually every Sunday from the

beginning of Lent till Low Sunday for this purpose and this only, namely "the completing of the said building and of the adjoining cloisters, and the repairing thereof; for, as we are informed by trustworthy persons, the ordinary resources are not sufficient for the work on the church and cloisters afore-mentioned, without the contribution of the alms of Christ's faithful ones."*

It seems that the whole structure of both Cathedral and cloisters was finished before Bishop Stafford's arrival, but in so great an undertaking there would always be some details left undone at the time. In the Fabric Rolls under the date 1398 there is a suggestive entry of £5 (£80) received from Bishop Brantyngham's executors for stones for the paving of the cloisters, and doubtless the mention of the cloisters in Stafford's precept of the following February had in view either that or some similar work.†

This Bishop has been described as a scholarly man and a great patron of learning. That was shown by his interest in Stapeldon Hall at Oxford, to which he extended his great generosity. He erected a new west gateway, he reroofed half of the hall, he covered the chapel with lead and rebuilt its porch, he spent 200 marks (£2,095) in enlarging the library, which he enriched by valuable gifts of books, and he gave a chalice and service books to the chapel; and, furthermore, he enlarged the foundation by the addition of two studentships, whose holders were to be chosen from the diocese of Salisbury. In consequence of these benefactions he was regarded as the second Founder, and the grateful inmates in 1430 pledged themselves to observe his obit every year. The change of name from Stapeldon Hall to Exeter College is attributed to him; but there is some ground for believing that what Stafford did in 1404 was merely to give authoritative recognition to what was a common usage, and not an invention of his own, whereby the famous name of his great predecessor was obscured.

The Lollard movement had been gaining strength for

* *Register*, 74, 92, 95, 133, 135, 239, 245, 261, 293, 294, 308, 311, 317, 338, 346.

† Oliver's *Bishops*, 387.

some years before Stafford's episcopate, and during his time it waxed to its fullest power and began to wane. The first condemnation was issued against John Wycliffe in 1377, when Pope Gregory XI dispatched to England five Bulls declaring that he "had not feared to assert, profess and publicly proclaim certain propositions and conclusions, erroneous and false, and discordant with the Faith." The nature of the wrong teaching was not defined, though a copy of the said propositions and conclusions was said to be enclosed for the guidance and information of the Bishops; but he was to be arrested and imprisoned, and a report of his confession or statements was to be sent to the Pope, further action being stayed until commands should be received from Rome. Five years later a *catena* of twenty-four propositions, purporting to be Wycliffe's tenets, was drawn up under the direction of Archbishop Courtenay, and condemned by the Convocation of Canterbury. Soon after (A.D. 1382), at the request of the same Primate, Richard II granted Letters Patent conferring on all Bishops authority to arrest those who "wish secretly or openly to preach or maintain" false doctrines, "until they repent of the wickedness of their errors and heresies."

The first legislation on the subject belongs to the year 1401, when Parliament passed the statute *De hæretico comburendo*, which, although still attempting no definition of the heretical teaching, sufficiently indicates the Lollards as "a certain new sect, damnably thinking of the faith of the sacraments of the Church and the authority of the same"; and it enacts that such as are condemned by a Bishop or his commissaries, and refuse to recant, are to be handed over to the civil authorities, who shall "them before the people in a high place cause to be burnt, that such punishment may strike fear to the minds of others." Our Bishop had a hand in the trial of the first victim of this cruel Act, the Reverend William Sawtry, who on his condemnation by the Convocation of Canterbury was burnt at Smithfield.

There is no evidence that Lollardism gained much footing in the Exeter diocese; indeed the historian of Lollardy, G. M. Trevelyan, can find no trace of the spread of the heresy

into either Devon or Cornwall.* But certainly there was fear of such infection, for a "Proclamation against Lollards" by Henry IV was addressed to the Sheriff of Devon in 1408; and the Mandate for prayers for the new King—"for peace and other blessings, and for the extirpation of sedition, schism, and heresy, specially of that execrable pest Lollardy"—was published in the diocese in 1413, as well as the Bishop's Mandate for the proclamation of the King's Letter against Lollards. The trial of Lord Cobham (Sir John Oldcastle) in the same year gives us his profession of faith, couched in his own words, and shows us that his condemnation was based on his opposition to the venerating of images, his contention that confession to a priest is not necessary, and his slighting of papal authority. For these tenets he was adjudged by Archbishop Arundel to be a heretic, and was so denounced by all the bishops of the Province.†

Though occupying so remote a corner of England, the people, and even the clergy, of the diocese of Exeter were not unaffected by the foreign wars that were waged by England's kings. Not only were Mandates issued requiring general supplications for Henry IV in his expedition against the Scotch in 1400, in his setting out to punish the Welsh rebels in 1401, and in the attack on France for the recovery of Aquitaine in 1412, and for the new king Henry V and the peace of his realm soon after his accession in 1413; but on more than one occasion the clergy were subjected to conscription and enrolled as an army of home defence. In the early summer of 1415, when the King was embarking on his Agincourt campaign, his Commissioners published their explicit directions, which applied to regulars and seculars alike. Those whose net stipend amounted to £100 (£1,562) were to bring to the muster of July 20th four men-at-arms and six archers, while of those with smaller stipends fewer retainers were required. The grading of the latter allowed one with £10 (£156) to come alone armed, and a choice of serving either as a man-at-arms or as an archer was left to

* *Age of Wycliffe.*

† Gee and Hardy, 105, 108, 110, 133; Stafford's *Register*, 129, 245, 269.

those in receipt of 10 marks (£104), those below that figure being exempt. By this means, as the Bishop certified, a force of 204 men-at-arms and 1,201 archers was raised. Three years later, when the English army was away in France, and the French and Spaniards had a great fleet and army ready to descend on our unprotected shores, a fresh summons was addressed to all ecclesiastical persons in the diocese, religious and secular alike, whether exempt or not exempt; and as a result the Bishop was able to report that he had succeeded in mustering exactly the same numbers as on the previous occasion. One cannot help wondering what sort of a fight would be put up by the monks and parochial clergy; but the use of arms was probably not unknown to many of them, and we have positive evidence that Bishop Brantyngham was possessed of a shield and a brass gun, and that John Hokere, Vicar of Seaton, had a sword and a bow and arrows.*

Bishop Stafford had made provision for his obit and had prepared his grave in the Cathedral a number of years before his decease, which occurred on September 3rd, 1419, at the age of 75; and his body lies entombed between the Lady Chapel and the Chapel of St Mary Magdalene beneath his alabaster effigy, which is arched over by a magnificent canopy, similar to that of Bishop Bronescombe opposite to it.†

The Exeter episcopate of Stafford's successor, John Catrik, is a blank, for it lasted only thirty-eight days, during which time he was away in Italy, so that he never even had the chance of seeing or getting in touch with his diocese; nor, so far as we know, had he in previous times had any connection with or knowledge of Devon and Cornwall. He was undeniably a man of ability and eminence, and we may safely infer that the Church in the west would have been favoured in having him as its chief ruler, if State business would permit of his residing in his see. Enjoying the friendship and patronage of Henry Beaufort (afterwards Cardinal), then Bishop of Lincoln, who ordained him priest and made him a prebendary, he afterwards became Treasurer of Lincoln

* *Register*, 81, 128, 303, 414, 419.

† *Register*, 336.

Cathedral, Prebendary of York and of Hereford, and Archdeacon of Surrey. He stood well in the eyes of the Pope, who provided him to the see of St David's, and next year to that of Coventry and Lichfield; and by him he was promoted four years later to become Bishop of Exeter. But most marked of all was the royal confidence that was reposed in him. Henry IV selected him as one of his ambassadors, whose responsible duty it was to negociate peace with the French; and by Henry V he was appointed Keeper of the Privy Seal and an ambassador at the Council of Constance, where after the death of Bishop Hallam of Salisbury he became the acknowledged leader of the English representatives. On the dissolution of the Council Catrik continued in the company of the Pope, Martin V, and with him sojourned in Florence for a while, during which time the Chapter of Exeter elected him as their Bishop, and the Pope provided him to that see; but, before he could leave that city, he was taken ill, and his honourable career ended on December 28th, 1419. In accordance with his own choice his body was interred in the Franciscan Church of Santa Croce in Florence, where in the middle of the floor of the nave may still be seen his effigy sculptured in white marble, with, hard by, the tombs of Michael Angelo and Galileo Galilei, of Machiavelli and Alfieri, "Ashes which make it holier, dust which is in itself an immortality."*

* *Register*, ix-xix; *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, XXXI, 78; *Trans. of Devon. Assoc.*, XVIII, 229-260; Byron's *Childe Harold*, iv, 54.

CHAPTER XII.

BISHOP LACY AND CHURCH REBUILDING.

AN admirable representative of the best type of English mediaeval bishops was Edmund Lacy, who after only three years' rule at Hereford was translated to Exeter in 1420, and held office for fully thirty-five years—longer than any of his line, with the exceptions of Grandisson and Phillpotts. Without any special advantages of birth or family connection—his parents were merely gentlefolk of Gloucester—his own abilities enabled him to rise to fill the posts of Master of University College at Oxford and of Canon of Windsor, and through royal favour he became Envoy to the King of France, Agent to the Papal Court, and Dean of the Chapel Royal, and then was elevated to the episcopal bench.

One of the most remarkable characteristics of his episcopate was his entire and wholehearted personal devotion to the work of his diocese—a characteristic that was unusual in mediaeval bishops. True, he did not come down to Exeter till seven or eight months had elapsed after his formal translation, but from that time onwards till the day of his death he was a resident diocesan. His *Register* regularly records his receiving the King's writ for the attendance of himself and the representatives of the diocese in Parliament or Convocation ; but there generally follows a form of commission appointing deputies to take his place with power to act ; and, though he was expected to visit the Papal Court every three years, we never find him doing so, though on one occasion at least (1429) he obtained from the Pope's Chamberlain a certificate that he had performed this duty by deputy. Not even the Council of Basle (1435) could entice him away from his diocese, but Henry Webber, Rector of St Mary Major's and Canon of Ottery, was told off to act as his proctor. Nor were the seven bishops who were appointed to assist

him in his diocesan work permanent suffragans, but they held office for a short while only, generally for about four or five weeks. The first of them, Richard "Cathensis," however, was employed for three or four months, acting for Lacy until his arrival in the diocese, and he was allowed to conduct a general Ordination in St Mary Major's at Exeter, besides tonsuring 97 persons during a pastoral tour through Devon and Cornwall. But after, the Diocesan himself officiated at every one of his Ordinations, except only that he nine times sent a deputy on a Confirmation tour, who conferred the first tonsure (and no higher Order) on a number of persons at various places that he visited. The other six assistants were John, Bishop of Annaghdown, John Bloxwych, Bishop of Iceland (who never set foot in his diocese, and was at the time Suffragan of Bath and Wells), John White, a deposed Bishop of Clonfert, John "Akadensis" (? Ardagh), James Blakedon, Bishop of Bangor, and Roderick "Arlatensis"; but of all these there is no evidence that any did anything beyond confirming and tonsuring, with the exception of the Bishop of Annaghdown, who reconciled the cemeteries of St Thomas's-by-Launceston and Menheniot, and consecrated the Chapel of the Blessed Mary at Callington. Truly an exemplary working bishop was Edmund Lacy.*

Lacy's *Register* is one of the largest and fullest of the whole series, and it is much to be wished that succeeding bishops had bestowed the same care as he, and had left us so detailed a chronicle of events. Its contents tell of no very important doings or happenings, but are mainly occupied with such details of episcopal work as were common in the records of his predecessors. Most frequent was the issue of Indulgences—all for forty days—for the encouragement of undertakings of divers kinds, secular as well as sacred. The new harbour at Seaton was aided by this means, and a causeway at Marazion, and a culvert at St Just, and quays or jetties at Newlyn and Mousehole and St Columb Minor; and Indulgences were granted too on behalf of St Margaret's leper hospital at Honiton and the poor-houses at Teignmouth,

* *Register*, 16, 571, 621, 709, 710; vol. III (MS.), ff. 239, 289, 300, 302, 340, 380, 405, 408, 413, 519.

and for Teign Bridge and Greystone Bridge, and bridges at Ottery and Tiverton, Hatherleigh and Sheepwash and Totnes, and for that over the river at Exeter as well as the road leading thence towards Cornwall, which was imperilled by floods. Barnstaple and Bideford were specially favoured in this respect, encouragement being offered to those who, at the former, should contribute to the great bridge and to the causeway leading to Pilton, or should visit the parish church on All Saints' Day, or St Anne's Charnel Chapel in the churchyard; while Bideford obtained no less than three Indulgences to help the upkeep of its bridge, and another for the repair of Cavey Road leading to Northam, and yet a third to induce visitors to perform their devotions in St Margaret's Chapel within the parish.

Of course there were some irregularities that called for the application of the Bishop's disciplinary powers. There were men of the Aylesbeare and Honiton deaneries who indulged in Sunday trading and neglected their church-going, so the Rural Deans were instructed to publish monitions; and traders were much addicted to the use of false weights and measures, especially a weight known as auncell or shaft or pounder, and an effort to restrain the abuse had to be made with the help of a general rescript from Archbishop Chichele.* Then, the licence for holding services in St Swithun's Chapel at Sandford had to be revoked, because people were forsaking the parish church at Crediton in order to flock thither; and the consecration of St Margaret's Chapel at Templeton was declared null and void, as it had been performed by someone from without, who professed to be a bishop, but had received no authority from the Diocesan or from the vicar or patrons of the mother-church of Witheridge.† At Ottery St Mary some naughty persons had been playing ball, "commonly called Tenys," in the churchyard—a trifling peccadillo, but regarded as sufficiently serious to require a Letter of Monition with a threat of the greater excommunication. Of a graver nature were conditions in Canonsleigh, where the Bishop had to appoint a commission to investigate and to

* *Register*, 523, 583, 630.

† *Register*, 667, 738, 740, 741.

reform the abuses and wrong-doings indulged in by the lady inmates. But a much more serious case was that of Thomas Mede, Abbot of Tavistock, who was charged with gross neglect and various misdemeanours (1438). There were thirteen separate accusations laid against him, which included such matters as infractions of the rules of his Order, the provision and conduct of services, his manner of life and moral conduct, the common business of the House, the keeping of accounts and annual audit, intercourse with persons without, especially women, and the closing of the Abbey doors. His monks were involved in the same category of crimes, and after receiving the Bishop's condemnatory monition they took two months to consider the situation, and then sent their reply. They protested that they all, especially the Abbot, were innocent of the charges brought against them, which, they declared, were trumped up by their enemies; but, inasmuch as they were but fallible, they promised obedience to his Lordship's requirements and to the regulations of their Order.*

This last affair was one that received very great attention from Lacy, as is manifest from the enormous length of the formal documents copied into his *Register*, and the care with which they were compiled; and the same observation may be applied to a number of other cases, which came before him for inquisition and adjudication. One of these was a dispute between Richard Talvargh, Vicar of Sancreed, and the Exeter Dean and Chapter, to whom the benefice was appropriated, concerning the upkeep of the chancel and repair of the books; and there was a similar one with regard to the repair of books and vestments between Nicholas Harry, late Sacrist of Glasney, and the Provost and Chapter of that Collegiate Church. In each case the individual, and not the corporation, was declared to be responsible. A long-standing disagreement between the Treasurer of the Cathedral and the Chapter was settled after two years' negotiations—the former to be responsible for providing lights and other requisites for Celebrations and Processions, but not for repairing or replacing vestments, books, and vessels; nor does his duty include the ringing of the bells or the charge of the clock. Differences

* *Register*, vol. III, ff. 312, 370, 418.

had arisen at Kingsbridge, where the parishioners had to be admonished to pay their burial fees of two pence (2s. 6d.), and at Cornwood, where it was ordained that every person of fourteen and over was to offer yearly at the Dedication Festival a halfpenny (7½d.) for mortuaries; and a very lengthy business was the settling of a grievance at Callington, whose inhabitants obtained burial rights for themselves, on the plea that they were far away—some of them three miles—from their parish church of South Hill. At Menheniot the rector had to complain that his people refused to pay him anything by way of tithe on calves sold or eaten before tithe-day, so the ruling was given that one-tenth of the value was due to him; and another strife over tithes was brought to a mutual agreement between the Chapter and Thomas Taylour, Rector of St Leonard's-by-Exeter.*

Other processes appear in the *Register*, some of them of enormous length, which serve to show the amount of thought and labour bestowed by the good Bishop on the work of governing and regulating his diocese, though some of them are not of special interest in themselves. Such are the proceedings connected with the election of Richard Tawton as Abbot of Hartland and of Thomas Cryspyn to Tavistock in 1442, the former occupying sixteen manuscript pages of the great volume; and the series of Injunctions drawn up for the guidance of the Prior and Convent of Bodmin and of those of Launceston. There are long documents defining the status of St Sidwell's Chapel near Launceston, and the rights and privileges of the Priory with which it was connected; others giving the Bishop's ruling concerning disputes between the authorities of Plympton Priory and the parochial Chapel of St Mary's at Plympton; and another recording an agreement arrived at between the Priory of St Mary of Marisco (Marsh Barton) and the Rector of Alphington. Much space is occupied by the formal appropriation of the church of Bampton to Buckland Abbey, and by an agreement between Bodmin Priory and Robert Oliver of that town concerning his obit, and by the report of a suit that arose between the Priories of Pilton and St Mary Magdalene's

* *Register*, 486, 524, 531, 538, 542, 562, 693, 698.

at Barnstaple. The trouble there was some uncertainty about parish boundaries, which led each Prior to claim the tithes of a piece of land called Petyngdon (now Pottington) and of a meadow known as Hollyford. The Bishop, who was visiting Pilton on a Confirmation tour, summoned both parties to appear before him; and, having examined fully into the matter and taken the evidence of sixteen witnesses concerning the traditional parochial boundaries, he ruled that both plots of ground were included in the parish of Pilton, and that therefore the tithes of both rightly belonged to the Prior of that place. Doubtless any feelings of irritation or uncharitable jubilation would be mitigated by his Lordship's politic present of ten marks (£101) to each party in the suit. All these topics concerned the Religious Houses, which indeed at that period wielded the chief influence in the land; but there were others too, as the application of the revenues of the Cathedral estates to the use of the canons and the chantry priests; the relations and rights of the inhabitants of Sourton in regard to their parish church at Bridestowe; and a dispute between the Vicar of Broad Hempston and his parishioners concerning rights over trees growing in the churchyard.*

That age appears to have been not so lawless as the previous century; but the few recorded outrages called forth long and plaintive laments from the Bishop, who spoke of one as "a crime without parallel in our time and in these parts." That one was in truth a horrible deed, for it was no less than the murder of John Hay, Vicar of Brent, who was dragged bleeding out of his church after Vespers one Corpus Christi Day (1436) and dispatched by a mob of ruffians. Some years before, a savage assault had been perpetrated in the Close at Exeter, a band of armed men breaking in one night and cudgelling and wounding in the head a canon and a vicar with much bloodshed; and again later some persons unknown were guilty of sacrilege and personal violence by ejecting from the Cathedral John Gyffard, a Justice of the Peace, and in the Close assaulting Henry Trevyne, a

* *Register*, 631; vol. III, ff. 424, 429, 436, 442, 452, 453, 458, 462, 474, 477, 482.

citizen of Exeter. But these cases were few, and we have no instances, as in past times, of such offences committed by clerics; for John Laa or Lage, curate, was acquitted as having merely acted in self-defence, when with a knife called a baselard he mortally wounded a man who attacked him with a bludgeon on Staverton Bridge. And only once was the Bishop the victim of trespass—such as some of his predecessors had to complain of several times—some miscreants breaking into his park at Morchard Bishop, and killing and driving away deer and other animals.*

As a working diocesan bishop he displayed admirable diligence. Of formal Visitations, indeed, we hear but little; but he was wont to travel through his whole diocese—Cornwall being treated as generously as Devon—on Confirmation tours, during which large numbers of men and boys received their first tonsure. This plan formed quite a characteristic feature of his administration, and in his Ordination lists we find mention of twenty of these tours, half of which—chiefly in his later years, when he was old and infirm—were undertaken by his deputies. His general Ordinations—which he seldom failed to hold on the four Ember Saturdays of each year, and generally also on Easter Eve and a fortnight before that day—he arranged for different centres, usually at the places where his manors were, such as Chudleigh (most frequently), Clyst, Crediton, Paignton, Bishop's Teignton, and Bishop's Tawton in Devon; and St German's, Glasney, Lawhitton, and Pawton in Cornwall. Exeter was often chosen, though, strangely enough, never the Cathedral, but almost always the Palace Chapel, his other sites being Bampton, Launceston, and Bodmin. In this way he provided good facilities to Confirmation and Ordination candidates, and also must have been accessible to those of the clergy and laity who might desire interviews with their Bishop.

His devoted attention to smaller duties is shown by his great carefulness in the appointing of penitentiaries for cases reserved, almost every year seeing a revised list published, and each deanery being allowed two or three or four, according to its size or requirements. Other details of his functions

* *Register*, 532, 647, 652, 751; vol. III, f. 259.

were the licensing of chapels in divers parishes, and the transferring of Dedication Festivals to more convenient dates, *e.g.*, at Topsham, Cullompton, Yarcombe, Barnstaple, Buckfastleigh, St Giles-in-the-Wood, St Dominic, and St Minver.* He had also to ordain the holding of processions and litanies at times of trouble or danger—when the plague was raging in 1431, when rains hindered the harvest in 1432, when the French were threatening Calais in 1436, and when the blessings of peace were sought for in 1444 and 1451. He had but little to do in the driving away of false teaching, for though many Lollards and others were burnt elsewhere for their unorthodox tenets, his diocese was free from this trouble; so that his duties were limited to arranging processions, with Indulgences for participants, as acts of prayer for immunity from the Hussite heresy; and to denouncing as a heretic a Franciscan, William Russell, who had been preaching at St Paul's Cross against tithes.† He experienced difficulty, however, through the non-payment of papal dues, and as soon as he arrived in his diocese he had to issue summonses to the religious corporations to send in their procurations for the Pope; for as many as twenty-two were in arrear, and some had been so for long—Otterton for sixteen years, St Michael's Mount for nine, and the Exeter Chapter, Canonsleigh, and Tywardreath for six. His mandates were not very efficacious, and three years later (1424) he had to report that there were twenty-six defaulters; and again, in 1441, just as many were in debt, the number including practically all the Religious Houses in the diocese. It was a period when Englishmen were much irritated by the claims and attempted aggressions of the Papacy, so that it is not surprising that these procurations were withheld.‡

As a stay-at-home prelate, Bishop Lacy seems to have made no effort to gain for himself a reputation in the outside world, and the authorities without left him alone in unnoticed obscurity. An ambitious man would have pushed himself

* *Register*, 431, 612, 627, 644, 738; vol. III, ff. 236, 266, 365, 384, 412.

† *Register*, 512, 519, 580, 588, 590, 644, 651; vol. III, ff. 256, 366.

‡ *Register*, 440, 456, 480, 492; vol. III, f. 235.

at Court—as he with his past connection might easily have done—and would have figured prominently in Parliament; but Lacy was not one of that sort, and was an absentee peer, who on one occasion was excused from attendance in the House of Lords on the score of ill health, and on another was fined eighty marks (£800) for not being in his place. On one great occasion, indeed, he was the preacher to a learned and important assembly; but that was in his own city, when the General Chapter of the Dominicans in England was held in the Chapter-house of the Order in Exeter on the festival of the Assumption in the year 1441. The company included twenty-five doctors of divinity and many other doctors and graduate members, and the Bishop chose as the text of his Latin sermon, "Who cometh up from the wilderness, abounding in delights" (Canticles, VIII, 5).*

But yet Bishop Lacy, in his quiet way, became known to fame, for he was a scholarly and able liturgiologist, and he compiled two works which won for him a place among notable churchmen. The more important of these works was his *Pontifical*, containing the various services to be performed by a bishop, including such unusual ones as those for the Coronation of a King and a Queen, prayers to be used at the Enthronization of an Archbishop, an Order for receiving back an apostate, and a Form of Praise for a Miracle, as well as the more common offices—Baptism, Confirmation, Giving of the First Tonsure and other Orders, Consecrations, Benedictions, and Professions. In many details his edition varies from the Roman, and one form—for consecrating holy oil—he pointedly describes as that in use at Salisbury; but the most remarkable feature of the book is a series of 193 prayers of benediction for Sundays and Saints' Days and other occasions, composed by Archbishop Peccham, and supplemented by thirteen others of different authorship. The original manuscript is in the possession of the Exeter Chapter, and was edited in 1847 by Mr Ralph Barnes, the Chapter Clerk, under the title of *Liber Pontificalis Exon.* Lacy's other work, which is not known to be extant, was an Office for St Raphael's Day (October 5th). That festival

* *Register*, 803.

he ordained to be observed in Exeter Cathedral (1443) and in Ottery St Mary Church (1445), and the Precentor and Canons of Crediton after careful examination adopted the use in their Collegiate Church. The Office was submitted to Pope Eugenius IV, and through his agency was critically examined by a committee of doctors of theology, who reported that they found it to be in agreement with Holy Writ and the teaching of the Church, and that it was calculated to promote the honour of God and His Saints, especially the Archangel Raphael, and to assist the devotions of Christian people (1444). Encouraged by this *imprimatur*, Lacy felt himself justified in requesting Bishop Spofford, who had almost immediately succeeded him at Hereford, to license the Office for use in his Cathedral, which he did. The Archbishop and the Chapter of York followed his example, and when Spofford's successor, Bishop Beauchamp, was translated to Salisbury a year after Lacy's death, he introduced the service into his new diocese. The English Franciscans, too, had accepted it in their Provincial Chapter immediately after it had received the approval of the Pope. To his old Cathedral he was decidedly generous, and also to York Minster, presenting to Hereford a full set of vestments and three copes and altar tapestries, computed to be worth over 200 marks (£2,000), while the Archbishop of York had to thank him for a similar gift of rich vestments and copes, together with £20 (£300) for the vicars choral.*

We do not know the full extent of his generosity to his own Cathedral, but it must have been considerable. The inventory of 1506 shows that, besides other of his benefactions, there were still to be found there a chalice and paten and two cruets of gold, two copper-gilt candlesticks, two silver-gilt basons, four frontals, a full set of vestments, and thirteen copes. But his contribution to the Cathedral was more than this. As soon as he became bishop, and before he had even set foot in his diocese, he issued from his London house a mandate to his officials and clergy and laity to require an annual collection for the fabric of the Cathedral and the

* *Register*, vol. III, ff. 252, 470, 485, 487, 492; *Liber Pontificalis*, v, xiii, 152, 205, 283; Oliver's *Bishops*, 102, 457.

Cloisters, to be continued until the work on them was completed. Of course the main structure had been finished under Grandisson; so Lacy must either refer to details still requiring attention, or more likely, being at a distance and not knowing existing conditions, he would include the Chapter-house in the designation "Cathedral"; and it would seem that there was still work to be done on the Cloisters, for we cannot otherwise explain his reference to them, several times repeated. Certainly, the expenditure as shown in the Fabric Rolls from 1421 to 1439 (the last of the series) was considerably more than it had been for some years previously, and we read of quantities of Beer stone being purchased between 1426 and 1435; besides which, in the latter year there is mention of the painting of 57 bosses "in the south ambulatory of the Cathedral," which must refer to finishing touches in the Cloisters. The Perpendicular style of the upper part of the Chapter-house is indicative of this period; so we infer that this bishop is to be credited with the completion of the fabric of this, as well as with the finishing off of the Cloisters.*

Another architectural work that was accomplished by Lacy was the building of the great hall of the episcopal residence in London. Apparently this owed its foundation to Stapeldon, and it was situated next to the Temple, westwards, occupying the ground just outside Temple Bar, between the Strand and the river. Several Bishops of Exeter held Ordinations there, and Bishop Arundell died there in 1503, his body being buried in the adjoining Church of St Clement Danes.†

But the name of Lacy is closely bound up with building, not so much for what he himself accomplished as for what was done for the parish churches in his time, for his episcopate was very remarkable as an age of rebuilding or restoration. Comparatively few of our churches passed through the Perpendicular period without undergoing some alteration, and the busiest time for ecclesiastical work with architects

* *Register*, 471; *Archit. Hist. of Ex. Cath.*, 88, 89; Oliver's *Bishops*, 389-391.

† *Church Quarterly Review*, Oct. 1919, p. 126.

and masons and carpenters was the episcopate of Edmund Lacy. During his lengthy rule some churches, too, were wholly built or rebuilt, such as St Andrew's at Plymouth, Totnes, Plympton St Maurice, Morchard Bishop, Okehampton, Huntshaw, Tregony, and St Edmund's and St George's in Exeter; or parts of the fabrics date from that time, as the south aisle of Tavistock, the tower of Bradninch, the nave and tower of Stockleigh Pomeroy, the main portion of Hartland, and most of Crediton Church.

The fact that the great majority of the screens, for which the two western counties are so noted, are of Perpendicular design, is probably to be explained by the great building activity of that period; for, when the structure of a church was renewed, the old screen would be found no longer to fit the space; or, if none existed before—an unusual condition—there would now be an incentive to beautify the new edifice by providing a screen. Anyhow a large number of these decorative works are assigned to Lacy's time.*

The Institution records of Bishop Lacy, which are complete and in perfect condition, are very illuminating, and they bespeak a prelate who was exceedingly business-like and particular as to the fulfilment of all due formalities in the administration of his diocesan work. He was evidently a lover of method, orderliness, and precision, as well as a stickler for legality. The documents drawn up concerning the filling of an abbacy or priorship are in each case many in number and of marvellous fulness and length; and in many instances he was scrupulously exact in appointing a commission to make searching inquisition as to the truth of a reported vacancy of a benefice and the rights of patronage, and of course refused to institute until he had received testimony from the commissaries that all was right and accurate. We learn that he was no severe disciplinarian, prone to dragoon his clergy and adopt extreme measures against recalcitrant and criminous clerks—for during his whole episcopate there were only two cases of deprivation; but he seems to have steadily discountenanced exchanges of benefices, for after

* *Register*, passim; Hussell's *North Devon Churches*; *Devon Notes and Queries*, III, 113; *Trans. of Devon. Assoc.*, XXXV, 434.

his first three years, when they averaged fifteen *per annum*, the annual average fell to four or five—a striking contrast, when compared with former episcopates. A natural consequence of this was that resignations were numerous (605 vacancies were due to resignation, and 704 were caused by death); and, as we noticed in the returns of Bishop Brantyngham, there was a marked tendency on the part of incumbents to resign after a time of heavy mortality.* This readiness to resign was encouraged by the adoption of a system of pensions: £8 (£120) to the Rector of Modbury, £6 13s. 4d. (£100) to the Rector of Heanton Punchardon, £5 6s. 8d. (£80) to the Vicar of St Gluvias, £4 13s. 4d. (£70) to the Rector of Powderham, and £3 10s. 0d. (£52) to the Vicar of Tavistock, these sums being chargeable on the income of the benefice.† The fact that in his early years no benefices are stated to have lapsed to the Bishop may be taken as an indication that patrons then found no difficulty in filling even the less attractive and worse endowed livings; and this in turn shows that the Church had recovered from the former scarcity of candidates, and that the clergy were better paid than had been the case. Another feature of the entries is that very few incumbents were non-graduates—and the number of *magistri* is considerable when compared with the *domini*—which is a proof that the bishops had found it possible to raise the standard of their Ordination requirements.

The diocese seems to have had a very sufficient supply of clerics during the earlier part of Lacy's episcopate. In one year (1423) as many as 95 were admitted to priests' Orders, and in another (1429) 78 to deacons'—both abnormally large numbers; and, though his Ordination returns appear to be meagre for his first two years, his *Registrum commune* reveals the fact that many obtained letters dimissory to be ordained by some other bishop. There was a marked decrease in 1431 and 1432, when the deacons for the two years were only 49 and the priests 31, but the former was a plague year,

* The death-roll was highest in 1451-2, and the greatest number of resignations was in 1453; and the nearest approximation to the latter was in 1432-3, which followed the plague season of 1431-2.

† *Register*, 187, 205, 208, 217, 276.

which doubtless cut off some who would have offered themselves as candidates ; and the like appeared in 1451 and 1452, when the same cause would account for the priests totalling only 48. The lowest number was in 1437—7 deacons and 9 priests—when we must infer that Lacy, whose health was often poor, was partly incapacitated by illness, for he held only three Ordinations in the year ; but from his *Register* we learn that 24 others obtained letters dimissory, and thus the average was nearly maintained. We notice, however, a decrease in the number of ordinands in the latter part of this episcopate, the falling off being due not to any personal considerations, but to the general decadence of the Church and her influence. We find evidence of this in such a casual statement as that Richard Dircomb, chantry priest at Newton Poppleford, obtained licence to say Mass twice a day, whenever necessary, in order that he might thereby serve also Farringdon Church, " which, owing to the dearth of clergy, is without divine service." But it is shown more markedly by the increase of mandates of compulsion, which applied ecclesiastical conscription to make a curate serve some parish that lacked a clergyman. Such mandates were scarcely ever issued by Lacy during his earlier years, but from 1441 onwards they became much more common—a proof of difficulty experienced in filling vacant posts.

The graduate question had been to the fore for some while, the Universities having petitioned Convocation in 1421 to support them by enacting that for the next ten years no patron should present to a vacant benefice any cleric, unless he were a graduate. This was done, but later (1439) the need for renewed action was felt again, and the University authorities spoke very strongly about the encouragement given to non-graduates by promoting them to livings, declaring that their students lost the incitement to pursue their studies ; and they were apprehensive lest those seats of learning should be deserted, if graduates gained no advantage by the expenditure of their money and their toil. The petition was approved by the King, and, on its being agreed to by Convocation, the various bishops published in their dioceses the ten years' preferential treatment of graduates.* In

* *Register*, 453, 483, 721, 765.

the Exeter diocese, however, there would seem to have been little ground for complaint in this respect; for when, as a fair test, we scrutinize the educational status of the 80 priests who were honoured by being appointed as penitentiaries in the various deaneries, we discover that only 2 were non-graduates, 34 being Masters, and 43 Bachelors (1 is not specified).* But it was still found necessary to encourage clerics to resort to a university (generally Oxford) to make amends for past neglect by a course of study, and sometimes leave of absence for the purpose was granted for a long period—the Rectors of Bradstone and Ludgvan had licence for five years, and the Rector of Churchstanton for seven. Such permission was in accordance with a decretal of Boniface VIII, which (over-riding a canon of the Council of Lyons of 1272) allowed the granting of as long as seven years' leave of absence for purposes of study. The same Council had decreed that, if a beneficed cleric was still not in priest's Orders at the end of a twelve months' incumbency, he was to be deprived; but Boniface had taken upon himself to abrogate that regulation also.†

Some idea of the clerical stipends current at that period is to be gained from a return made by the Bishop in response to a demand from the Primate (1426). Convocation had granted a rate of a farthing in the pound for the defence of the rights and liberties of the Church of England, to be levied on all ecclesiastical effects, including offices that were not taxed; so there is set forth a statement of the annual value of untaxed benefices in the diocese. From this it appears that most of these ranged from £5 1s. 0d. (£78) to £7 (£108), those in Cornwall being the poorest—few of those rose above £5 5s. 0d. (£81), while scarcely any in the Exeter archdeaconry fell below £5 6s. 8d. (£82). Almost all of those mentioned were vicarages, and presumably the reason why they were untaxed was that they were the poorest benefices in the diocese. From a later return (1433) we learn that for some reason a few wealthier livings were exempt—Barnstaple £13 6s. 8d. (£205), Braunton £10 (£153), and Fremington

* *Register*, 758.

† *Register*, 491, 495, 562, 567, 587.

£9 6s. 8d. (£143); and that the emoluments of the archdeaconries of Exeter and Totnes were £20 (£306) each, Barnstaple £12 (£184), and Cornwall £9 6s. 8d. (£143). Our evidence tends to show that, in the generality of cases, the fifteenth century rector was sufficiently well paid; but that many vicars had a reasonable grievance in this respect is undeniable, and practical experience made it plain that men either refused to accept appointments, or were unable to live as respectably as they ought. Their grievance was recognised by Convocation, which in 1440 enacted that in future no patron was to engage a vicar for a smaller stipend than 12 marks (£121), unless the total income of the benefice was less than that sum.*

The fifteenth century is commonly regarded—truthfully, no doubt—as a period in which there was but little religious self-devotion; but it is well that we should not lose sight of such examples of it as we light upon in the chronicles of that time. Here is a vow of self-dedication to life-long virginity and chastity on the part of a devoted woman (1426). "I, in the name of God, Richarde Ayssh, make a vowe to god of perpetual chastite of my body from this day forward, yn the presence of yow, Reverend Father in god, Edmound, by the grace of god bysshop of Exeter, and promytte to lyve in chastite sool wt oute compaygnye of man term of my lyffe, and to do and kepe that i wt my honde make this subscripcion." A similar vow, couched in French, was made by Cecilia Ferrers before the Bishop, while he was celebrating High Mass in his manor chapel at Chudleigh, and was attested by her with the sign of the Cross (1437). And here is an interesting notice of the profession and benediction of Thomas Cornish as a hermit, the ceremony taking place in the Bishop's oratory adjoining the aforesaid chapel, and the form of profession being this (1450):—"I, Thomas Cornysshe, not wedded, promise and avowe to God and to our Lady St Marie and to all the Seyntes of heven, in the presence of you, Reverent father in God, Edmund, Bishop of Exeter, to leve in perpetual castity after the rule of Seynt Paule the furste hermyte, In the Name of the fader and sone and the holy

* *Register*, 545, 601, 763.

Goste. Amen." The most careful circumspection was exercised in dealing with such cases, in order that the motives and the resolution of the person might be thoroughly tested; and so we read that before Richard Lyle, a canon of Plympton Priory, was allowed to take the vows of an anchorite and be duly immured in his cell within the bounds of the Priory, Canon Henry Webber of Exeter Cathedral was deputed by the Bishop to conduct a searching examination of the case.*

In July 1452 Edmund Lacy, now an octogenarian, was honoured by a visit from the King, who was lodged as a guest in his palace at Exeter. It must have been an imposing and magnificent spectacle when his Majesty Henry VI rode into the city, attended by so great and honourable a concourse—for on his way from Ottery St Mary he was joined by many of the knights and gentlemen of the county; then at Clyst Honiton there met him the Mayor and leading citizens, to the number of over three hundred, all wearing the city livery; the Franciscans and the Dominicans awaited him at Liverydole; and outside Southgate were the Priors of St Nicholas's and St John's with the city clergy, all vested in their copes. There the King was censed, and kissed the Cross; and the Mayor, having delivered up the keys of the gate, bore the mace before him, and escorted him through the streets, richly hung with silks and tapestries, to Broadgate, where he was received by the Bishop and Canons and choir, and was brought in procession into the Cathedral. Before the high altar he offered his devotions, and then repaired to the Palace.

That event forms almost the closing scene of this long episcopate, for the end was then near. The Bishop must have reached the great age of about 85 when he died, and his powers had failed so much at the last that the King instructed the Dean and Canons to take the management of his worldly affairs. He died at his favourite Chudleigh (September 18th, 1455), and his body was entombed on the north side of the Cathedral choir. He was a man of many virtues, and we know of no faults—for the fact that he had a dispute with the city in 1447 proves nothing against him—one of the features

* *Register*, 554, 672, 744; vol. III, ff. 352, 353.

in his favour being that he is quit of any charge of nepotism. It was so usual in those days for a Bishop to put his kindred into high places, that it redounds the more to his credit that the name of Lacy is not to be found in the lists of diocesan officials or of those who occupied stalls in the Cathedral and the Collegiate Churches. His memory was venerated so dearly by the people, that his was the one tomb in the Cathedral that was honoured by being made the goal of pilgrimages—a display of piety which so incensed the puritan Dean Haynes, that, in order to discourage the practice, he despoiled the stone of its brass effigy and inscription.* If circumstances had been more favourable, our two English St Edmunds—the martyred King of East Anglia and Archbishop Rich of Canterbury—might have been joined by a third, in the person of St Edmund of Exeter.

* *Dic. of Nat. Biog., Supplement*, III, 74; *Liber Pontificalis*, xi; *Register*, 400; vol. III, f. 286; Hoker's *Bishops*, 33.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE EVE OF THE REFORMATION.

EXETER has good reason to be proud of her mediaeval Bishops. Most of them were men of high character and unblemished repute, and none—so far as we can discover—was guilty of evil living or base actions, their faults being chiefly absenteeism and over-addiction to the performance of State duties, which indeed involved loss to the Church, but were not heinous in kind. In this respect Exeter compared favourably with many other English sees, not even excepting Canterbury ; while the English episcopate as a whole presented a happy spectacle as regards morals and virtues and even Christian faith, when contrasted with the Roman pontiffs, for in England we had no bishops comparable to the worst Popes. The passing away of Lacy, however, marks the close of an era ; for with him ended the goodly series of great Bishops of Exeter, who for two whole centuries had maintained a high standard of life and work, during all the period in which their *Episcopal Registers* enable us to form an opinion of their characters and their doings ; and indeed, so far as the more scanty records furnish indication, the prelates of the two previous centuries, back to the founding of the see under Leofric, appear to have been a succession of good and able diocesans. But with the accession of Neville there begins a new line of bishops, who though still mostly men of ability and good qualities, figured less favourably as chief pastors of the diocese of Exeter, which was never again so well governed and served until quite recent times, except only by Joseph Hall and during one or two later episcopates of brief duration.

The history of George Neville is an extraordinary one, both because of the fulfilment of his very exalted ambitions, and still more because of the amazingly early age at which

he gained his high preferments. In all this he was aided chiefly by his aristocratic connections, being a son of the Earl of Salisbury, who was Lord Chancellor under Henry VI; a younger brother of Richard, Earl of Warwick, the King-maker; and a nephew of Richard, Duke of York, who was the head of the "White Rose" party. When only a boy of thirteen or fourteen years old, he became a prebendary of York; at twenty or twenty-one he was Chancellor of Oxford University, having already proceeded to the usual Arts degrees as a member of Balliol; he was consecrated to the bishopric of Exeter when he was twenty-five or twenty-six, and two years later was appointed Lord Chancellor; and at thirty-two or thirty-three he became a Primate, as Archbishop of York. His elevation to the episcopate was entirely a case of "jobbery," due to the influence of his father, who gained for him from the Privy Council the promise of the next vacant see. On the death of Bishop Lacy, John Hales, Dean of Exeter and Archdeacon of Norwich, was chosen to succeed him; but the Nevilles insisted on the fulfilment of the promise, and the Council and the Pope were both obliged to rescind their act, and to endorse the election of George Neville, which meanwhile had been obtained from the Chapter of Exeter. Callixtus III, however, stipulated that his consecration should be deferred for a while, as he was so very youthful, being scarcely twenty-three; and so for nearly three years (till 1458) he had to be content to act only as bishop-elect, though he had the full enjoyment of the temporalities, and was included in summonses to episcopal Councils—together with Hales, who had now become Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield.

Neville's nine years' tenure of office was not much concerned with his diocese of Exeter, for he was an absentee during nearly the whole of that time, his place being very insufficiently occupied by temporary assistants. He did indeed visit his Cathedral for his enthronization four months after his consecration, and held a couple of Ordinations at Crediton and Exeter; but nine months later he quitted his diocese, never to return, leaving the faintest reminiscences of his rule here—his coat-of-arms emblazoned in the east

window of the Cathedral, and carved on a pillar at Plymtree and on a corbel at Branscombe—indications of works undertaken in his time. Truly the would-be Church reformers of those days, Lollards and others, had flagrant abuses to inveigh against; and it cannot but be accounted a grievous scandal that the youthful head of a great diocese should have been absent for almost the whole of his episcopate, acting as Lord Chancellor, undertaking important political missions, entering into all the intrigues of Yorkists and Lancastrians, and even taking part in military operations of the Wars of the Roses; while the crown was bandied about from one party to another, and now Henry VI, now Edward IV, was King with no certainty or permanence of tenure. Neville was a man of parts, and he showed his skill in the success with which he generally managed to stand well in the eyes of both sovereigns—or else to be feared by them—and he gained his reward by being translated to York by Edward IV in 1465. But later he fell on evil days, and, after losing all his temporal honours and suffering imprisonment for three years, he broke down in health, and ended his very full career at the early age of only forty-three or forty-four.*

It was fortunate for our English diocesans that the Church in Ireland was very generously officered at this period, the bishops numbering thirty-six. Consequently, their dioceses being small, many of the Irish prelates were able to come over to England and act as deputies for their brethren, when they were employed on State business. This was a common practice for some centuries, as our previous narratives have shown; and, besides the Irishmen, there were—at least after the middle of the fourteenth century—a number of bishops *in partibus*, whose services could be secured in time of need. During Neville's rule the Exeter diocese was left to the ministrations of a succession of assistant bishops, five in number. The first was Roderick, "Episcopus Arlatensis," whom he inherited from his predecessor. He was Rector of Buckland Filleigh, and on one occasion honoured his own church by holding an Ordination within its walls; but he seems to have failed to gain general respect in the diocese,

* *Register; Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, XL, 252; Oliver's *Bishops*, 104.

for there is record of a savage assault made on him by one Simon Drayton, a layman of Newton St Cyres, who was in consequence declared to have incurred *ipso facto* the ban of the greater excommunication. James Blakedon, Bishop of Bangor, Thomas Salscot, Bishop of Annaghdown, and Symon "Connerensis," all conducted Ordinations in the diocese, generally in St Mary Major's at Exeter; and John, titular Bishop of Tenos, and Vicar of Devizes, came occasionally from the diocese of Bath and Wells, where he was Suffragan, to act for the absent Neville.* A large part of the administrative work of the Church was done by the Vicar General, Henry Webber, Precentor and afterwards Dean of the Cathedral. For instance, it was he who issued commissions for enquiring into rights of patronage, and instituted to vacant benefices, and annually appointed penitentiaries—generally three or four for each deanery—to hear confessions in cases usually reserved for the Bishop. And from him, too, issued all manner of licences, such as six months' leave of absence to the Prior of Tywardreath, and sanction to the Rector of Ashbury to celebrate twice in a day, and authority to Michael Carvanell, Rector of North Lew, to preach in churches, chapels, and other places in the diocese. Thus, in a manner, the Church's functions were performed; but work done by the deputies of an absent chief is very different from what it ought to be, if he were present to organize and direct.†

Two considerable disturbances in the outside ecclesiastical world at this time probably had but small effect in this remote corner of England. One was the condemnation of Bishop Pecock of Chichester (1457), which was immediately followed by a mandate from the Primate to the Exeter diocese, requiring a public declaration as to the heretical nature of his tenets—for he, a man of learning and enlightenment, held that the authority of the Scriptures and of reason was superior even to that of Church tradition, and that a real effort to convert Lollards from their erroneous opinions should be attempted before adopting the extreme measure of burning

* *Register*, f. 34; *Reg. Sacrum Angl.*, 145, 146.

† Neville's *Register*, ff. 34, 40.

them. The other was the publication of a lengthy rescript issued by the Pope to the whole of Western Christendom (1464), in which he offered indulgences to all who would go to fight against the Turks; for since the fall of Constantinople the Moslem power had become a serious menace to the very existence of the Church and of European civilization.*

A very episcopal family were the Bothes (or Booths) of Cheshire and Lancashire, for not only did John Bothe (son of Sir Robert Bothe, Knight) become Bishop of Exeter, but his brother William was Bishop of Lichfield, and his half-brother Lawrence was Bishop of Durham; and the one preceded, and the other succeeded, George Neville at York. From the former, John gained preferment as Prebendary of York and Archdeacon of Richmond, and by papal provision he was raised to the episcopate as Bishop of the western see. Here again was a lamentable instance of absenteeism, and, unlike Neville, he could not prefer as an excuse that he was employed in important public services. Indeed, there is no obvious reason to account for his failing to reach his diocese till a year and a half after his consecration, and for his confining his work there to three visits, lasting respectively two years, five months, and three months—a meagre allowance of his time, seeing that his episcopate lasted for thirteen years (1465-1478); and even his dead body was bestowed elsewhere, being buried at East Horsley in Surrey, whose episcopal manor was his favourite abode. From Bishop Bothe's time there dates one considerable work at the Cathedral, though we have not evidence for ascribing it to his generosity—the roof of the Chapter-house with its beautiful fan-work vaulting; but beyond that we know little of the history of his time, for his *Register* is one of the least interesting in the mediaeval series, being almost entirely confined to the formal records of institutions and inquisitions concerning vacant benefices, as only one leaf of the *Registrum Commune* is preserved, and the lists of ordinations are all missing.†

Yet another Bishop who owed his elevation to his dis-

* Neville's *Register*, ff. 35, 62; *Concilia*, Wilkins, III, 587.

† *Register*; *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, V, 387; Oliver's *Bishops*, 106, 246.

tinguished lineage and honourable connections was Peter Courtenay, a son of Sir Philip Courtenay of Powderham, and grandson of Lord Hungerford. But his high birth was not his only merit, for he won for himself laurels as a scholar both at Exeter College, Oxford, and at Padua. In that age a clergyman of aristocratic family might confidently expect wealthy preferments, and Courtenay proved to be no exception, stepping into the benefices of Moreton Hampstead and Menheniot, the archdeaconry of Exeter and the deanery, and, amongst other posts outside the western counties, the deanery of Windsor; and then by papal provision he was moved on from the deanery of Exeter to the palace—the first instance of such promotion (1478). With several of his kinsmen deeply involved in the political strifes and plottings of those days it would be difficult for Bishop Courtenay, a member of one of the principal Lancastrian houses, to hold aloof; and we find him joining with a number of west country gentlemen in attempting to foster a rising against Richard III. The conspiracy was strongly supported, and the King found it advisable to dispatch John, Lord Scrope, to Devon to take vigorous action. A court of enquiry sat at Torrington, and it was found that other confederates included such leading ecclesiastics as Dean John Arundell, the Archdeacon of Exeter (David Hopton), and Abbot Oliver of Buckland; while among the five hundred laymen were Sir Thomas Fulford, Sir Thomas Arundell, Richard Edgecombe, Walter Courtenay, and Hugh Luttrell. The plot having failed, they were condemned by Parliament, but succeeded in escaping across the water to Brittany or elsewhere in France—all except Sir Thomas Sentleger (the King's brother-in-law) and Sir John Rame, who were captured, and beheaded at Exeter. Richard then came down to the capital of the west, and was lodged and right well entertained in the palace of the fugitive Bishop. As soon as Henry VII mounted the throne, the exiles returned, and their devotion to his cause received its reward. Edward Courtenay was created Earl of Devon, and his cousin Peter was appointed Lord Privy Seal and soon afterwards, on the death of William of Waynfleet, Bishop of Winchester (1487).

The Cathedral possesses a permanent memorial of this Bishop in the bell "Peter" in the north tower, which was his gift, the completion of that tower being also his work. The tower of Honiton Church, too, was built at his charges, and he was a large contributor to the cost of erecting the church itself.*

After so many examples of the contrary sort it is refreshing to light upon a man who won his way to high and honourable position by his own worth and the exercise of his natural abilities. For Richard Foxe was not by birth to be reckoned among "the upper ten," his father being merely a Lincolnshire yeoman. However, he was favoured by fortune, in that, while he was following up his studies at Oxford by a course at Paris, he came under the notice of Henry, Earl of Richmond, who utilized him for his negotiations with the French monarch Charles VIII, and, soon after he had mounted the English throne, made him Lord Privy Seal and Bishop of Exeter. It is disappointing to find that Foxe neglected his diocese even more than his high-born predecessors, for he never once crossed its border during his five years of headship (1487-1492), though he did at once appoint a deputy, Thomas Cornish, Bishop of Tenos, who, as acting diocesan of both, was to share between Exeter and Wells such time as he could spare from his other various charges. In his old age Foxe bitterly regretted that failure in duty, and, by withdrawing from State service and devoting himself to the oversight of his Winchester diocese, he endeavoured to make some amends for having entirely absented himself from his two early charges—for, having been translated from Exeter to Wells, he had treated his second diocese even as he had his first.

If only Foxe had been *de facto* Bishop of Exeter, the western country would have been justifiably proud of him, for he was really great, and for what he accomplished for education in England he deserves unbounded praise. That work, indeed, belonged to a later period of his career; but we can hardly pass over his name without recalling that he was the founder of Corpus Christi College at Oxford, and

* *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, XII, 339; Oliver's *Bishops*, 109; *Royal Visits to Exeter*, 60, 65.

therein showed himself one of the most progressive educationists of his age, in that he designed it not for the benefit of the regulars, after the example of Durham and Canterbury Colleges, but as a place of study for those who were to be secular clergymen. Still more, as a devotee of the New Learning he encouraged the cultivation of Greek and also of classical Latin. His founding of a lectureship in Greek was the first public recognition of that language at either university, and other bold innovations were his bringing from Italy Ludovicus Vives to be Reader in Latin, and his ordaining that the Reader in Theology should base his exegesis on the Fathers rather than on the Schoolmen.*

Save for the change in the name of the chief governor, the government of the diocese continued under Oliver King as it had under Richard Foxe, for he too was an absentee, being likewise occupied by public affairs. His ecclesiastical antecedents—he was Dean of Hereford and Archdeacon of Taunton—were eclipsed by his secular appointments as chief Secretary in French to the King, and Commissioner at the Court of Charles VIII; and even when he became Bishop of Exeter (1493), he obeyed the call of the State rather than the call of the Church. However, his tenure of the bishopric was but brief, for after two years and a half he passed on—theoretically though not personally—to Wells, in succession to Bishop Foxe, who was translated to Durham. His will is a very curious document, because he began it in Latin, and then proceeded in the vulgar tongue, "quia non omnes huius testamenti latinam linguam intelligunt." It contains no allusion to his former diocese, but he bequeathed some church ornaments to both Wells and Bath; and, after directing that his body was to be buried in the choir at the latter place, he included this interesting desire among the arrangements for his funeral:—"That a dyner and repast be made for the poore and not for the Riche, for my remuneracion ys not in the place that I goo fro but, as my hope ys, in that place which I goo to."†

* *Register; Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, XX, 150; Oliver's *Bishops*, 112.

† *Register; Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, XXXI, 142; Oliver's *Bishops*, 114; Wills, P.C.C., Blamy, 31.

As a Regular—for he had for many years been Abbot of Shap in Westmorland—Richard Redmayne recognised the claims of the Church upon his time and attention more fully than his predecessors had done; besides which, his civil appointments were less important and exacting than theirs had been, and the fact of his being a Privy Councillor of Henry VII did not require him to neglect his diocese. So, when in 1495 he was promoted from St Asaph, where he had proved himself a munificent benefactor by rebuilding the ruined cathedral, he became resident Bishop of Exeter, and gave himself up to his diocese, until removed to Ely six years later. His brief rule here was followed by an even briefer one there, and, dying in 1505, his body was buried in Ely Cathedral in accordance with his will, wherein he assigned the large sums of £100 (£1,397) for funeral expenses, and £20 (£279) for his octave, and £30 (£419) for his trentals.*

John Arundell was the first Cornishman—and the only other Cornishman besides Sir Jonathan Trelawny and William Buller—to occupy the throne of Leofric at Exeter; and he was thoroughly representative of the gentry of Cornwall, for his father Humphrey was of ancient and honourable pedigree in that county, and his mother was a Coleshill of Tremadart in the parish of Duloe. His career, too, was closely knit up with the west; for he graduated at Exeter College, Oxford; he held (besides other preferments elsewhere) the benefices of St Columb Major and Duloe; for thirteen years he was Dean of Exeter, until his elevation to the episcopal bench as Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield; and then six years later he was back in his old diocese as successor to Bishop Redmayne. He was a resident diocesan, and was well reported of for his learning and character; but unfortunately his tenure of office lasted less than two years, as he was cut off by sickness in his London house, his body being buried, as directed by his will, in the church of St Clement Danes, close at hand (1504). The diocesan chronicles have little to tell of his administration, save for his care to pension off aged and infirm incumbents with generous allowances,

* *Register; Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, XLVII, 383; Oliver's *Bishops*, 115; Wills, P.C.C., Holgrave, 38.

the Vicar of Wydecombe-in-the-Moor being granted £12 (£168), the Rector of Widworthy £10 (£140), and the Vicar of Whitchurch 8 marks (£75).*

To his credit it must be recorded that Arundell performed his duties personally, being in this respect unlike his predecessors and his two immediate successors; for Courtenay engaged John, Bishop of Ardagh, and King gave employment for a short time to Augustine Church, Bishop of Lydda; and during the greater part of the episcopates of Foxe, King, and Redmayne much work was done by Thomas Cornish, Bishop of Tenos, a distinguished pluralist, who, besides other appointments, at the same time held office as Provost of Oriel, Warden of Ottery St Mary, and Suffragan of Exeter and of Bath and Wells.†

The supply of ordinands during this period of half a century seems to have been small, comparing badly both with the years that preceded and with those that followed. In his long tenure of office Lacy's yearly average had been 33 deacons and 33 priests, and in Oldham's episcopate these were increased to 63 deacons and 66 priests; but in the intervening period, though Foxe's returns show averages of 35 and 33, and Neville's 29 and 24, Redmayne's figures fell to 13 and 15, and the fragmentary records of the other bishops show poor results. Similar statistics are obtained when we examine the numbers of those admitted to Minor Orders, and we must attribute this unsatisfactory condition partly to the neglect of their diocese by the absentee bishops, and partly to the general unpopularity of the ministry—consequent on the Lollards' exposure of prevalent abuses. From the details of an order issued early in that period (1463) for the levying of a tax of 6s. 8d. (£5) from every priest, we learn that there were then as many as 226 assistant clergymen in the diocese (163 in Devon and 63 in Cornwall); but, owing to the dwindling of the supply of candidates for Ordination, this surplus number was probably well-nigh absorbed by the end of the half century.‡

* *Register; Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, II, 146; Oliver's *Bishops*, 116; Wills, P.C.C., Holgrave, 14.

† *Reg. Sacrum Angl.*, 146.

‡ *Registers* passim, and Neville's *Register*, ff. 59, 60.

Though a Lancashire man, Hugh Oldham was no stranger to his future diocese, having been for a dozen years Archdeacon of Exeter, and Canon and Prebendary of the Cathedral, and Rector of Lanivet near Bodmin, besides holding a host of preferments in other parts of the country. Finally, by a papal provision of Julius II he became Bishop of Exeter, and held the see for fourteen years (1505-1519). Oldham's name is famous, not so much as a bishop, or for what he did in Devon and Cornwall, but because he was one of the early reformers, one who promoted the renaissance of learning in England by his encouragement of education. For two works he is, and ever will be, held in lasting remembrance. The one was solely his own undertaking, namely, the founding of the Manchester Grammar School—that site being chosen because it was either there or near there that he was born. The other was the share that he took in Bishop Foxe's great foundation at Oxford—Corpus Christi College. Foxe's first intention, as already mentioned, was to provide a college at the University to which the younger of his monks at Winchester might pass on in order to partake of the educational advantages of that seat of learning. But the prescience of Oldham taught him how to interpret the signs of the times ; and it was owing to his persuasions that his friend altered his scheme, and decided, instead, to establish a house for the sound teaching and religious education of secular clergy, whose *curriculum* should include Greek and classical Latin. A contemporary writer reports his argument as having been couched in this form :—" Shall we build houses and provide livelihoods for buzzing monks, whose end and fall we ourselves may live to see ? No, no ! it is more meet a great deal that we should have care to provide for the increase of learning, and for such as who by their learning shall do good in the Church and Commonwealth."* The grateful founder appointed a daily Mass to be said in the College chapel as an act of intercession for Oldham, who had given lands and houses at Chelsea towards the endowment, as well as the munificent sum of £4,000 (£55,000) ; and Oldham recipro-

* Holinshed, A.D. 1518 ; *Church in England*, Overton, I, 344 ; *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, XLII, 105.

cated the kindly thought by ordaining in his will that Bishop Foxe's name should be mentioned in his own daily memorial Mass and in his annual obit in Exeter Cathedral.

From the fact that Oldham made considerable use of assistant bishops we may infer that he was much absent from his diocese; but, though he left almost all his Ordinations to others, conducting only seven himself, ample opportunities were offered to ordinands, it being quite exceptional if Ember Saturday and Easter Eve were not so marked, with an extra one in the spring of most years. Cornwall, however, was not favoured in this respect, and save on four occasions candidates from that county had to travel to Devonshire, generally to Exeter, to be ordained. The prelates who assisted Oldham were four in number, and all were bishops *in partibus*. Thomas Cornish, Bishop of Tenos, had been employed by several of his predecessors, and Oldham at once renewed his commission, though he retained his services only for a very brief time. A year later he engaged the Bishop of Sebaste (Samaria), and employed him for a couple of years, his first function being the reconciling or purifying of St Saviour's Church at Dartmouth, which had been polluted by bloodshed. He was followed by the Bishop of Solubria, Thomas Chard, an ecclesiastic well known in the west, where he was a much beneficed man, holding the livings of Little Torrington, St Gluvias, Holbeton, and Thorncombe, the wardenship of Ottery St Mary, the abbacy of Forde, and the priory of Carswell, besides other posts outside the diocese. The great majority of the Ordinations of this episcopate were conducted by him during his ten years of office, his favourite place for holding them being the Charnel Chapel (St Mary's) in the Close, though he often officiated too in the Lady Chapel of the Cathedral. The fourth coadjutor was a Cornishman, Thomas Vivian, who bore the title of Bishop of Megara. His duties commenced only in the year before his chief's death, but he continued for long to act for Bishop Veysey. These various bishops dispensed Orders very freely, the average number *per annum* being close on 300; and it is remarkable that the majority of those admitted were recruits for the higher ranks of the ministry—priests and deacons

being many, whereas only 43 annually received the first tonsure. It is noticeable, too, that it had now become usual for the two lowest Orders to be conferred together, a man or youth being, not uncommonly, tonsured and made an acolyte at the same Ordination.

One of the early acts of his episcopate was a formal Visitation of his Cathedral, and from his revised code of statutes we are enabled to learn somewhat of the customs and the prevalent abuses of the time, the latter being not very serious in character. His Lordship begins by emphasizing the rule that the daily offices or Canonical Hours are to follow the Use of Sarum, but that local customs are to be fully recognised; and that all ministers are to attend, including the choir-boys—unless they are in school or at practice—though none is to be admitted till he is ten years of age. Processions and High Mass are never to be disturbed by the saying of Low Masses or the simultaneous repetition of other devotions. An effort is made to check the too frequent practice of canons holding canonries in other places also, whereby the Cathedral suffers loss, and the traditional hospitality of Exeter is not kept up; and inasmuch as that hospitality made great demands on their revenues, in future none was to be admitted to that office, unless he had £40 (£560) to his credit. Furthermore, the expenditure on installation banquets was excessive and must be reduced, for whereas in former times the usual cost was £20 (£280), there was now such extravagance that £50 (£700) was scarcely sufficient.*

The Visitation of the Cathedral was followed at once by that of the whole diocese. This included the Religious Houses, and the mandate to Abbot Banham of Tavistock led on to the successful revolt of that great monastery after four years' contention, as recounted in another chapter; while an investigation into conditions at Plympton revealed a lamentable state of extravagance and debt, which called for strongly repressive measures from the diocesan.†

There are not lacking other indications that Oldham's

* *Register;* Oliver's *Bishops*, 118, 465.

† *Register*, ff. 3, 4, 15, 50.

rule began with a good deal of vigour. Certainly a determined attempt was made to check the abuse of non-residence, which had been so much encouraged by the laxity consequent on the absenteeism of recent bishops, or the shortness of their terms of office. Peremptory orders were issued to John Cook, requiring him to return within a month to Crediton, where he was Treasurer, or to one of his cures of Morchard Bishop and Bishop's Nympton ; and similar precepts to reside within two months were served on the incumbents of Chudleigh and Kenton and Dolton and other parishes. Considerable care, too, was taken to encourage aged and infirm clergymen to retire by the provision of suitable retiring pensions ; and there was continued the customary appointment of penitentiaries—one or more in each deanery—for the hearing of confessions in cases reserved. And many a work of public usefulness was aided by the granting of a forty days' Indulgence to those who would contribute ; such as the repair of the long bridges at Barnstaple and Bideford, and of Taw Bridge (which was not strong enough to resist the pressure of the river in flood), and of two others at Launceston ; besides the more religious undertaking of the restoration of the Chapel of Blessed Mary at the Start in Stokenham parish.*

But even the early years of the sixteenth century were fraught with anxiety for the Church, for many evils were already germinating. Among these were the doctrinal upheaval and confusion that were troubling the minds of the unlearned and unstable. One such was John Atwylle, a simple rustic of Walkhampton, who had been foolishly airing his views on confession and indulgences and salvation, not only in his own parish, but also in Tavistock at the Archdeacon's Court and in the Church ale-house. The result was a summons to appear before the Lord Bishop in Paignton Church, where he had to renounce his heretical sayings. Another similar case was that of Otto Corbyn of Exeter, who was charged by the Mayor before the Bishop and his officials in the Cathedral for having refused to venerate the sacred wounds, and with giving vent to this silly utterance :— " I will never worship and byleve in the V wondes of Christe

* *Register*, ff. 1, 4, 5, 9.

till I have maried the Vth wyfe." What he meant exactly is not clear, but as he was commonly accounted to be tainted with heresy, the affair was treated as gravely serious, and he was obliged to make full acknowledgment and confession, and to submit himself absolutely to Holy Church and the Bishop.*

Another very disquieting occurrence was the alienating of episcopal manors, several being virtually confiscated with royal connivance. One very valuable asset had been "St Anthony's pigs," *i.e.*, the tithe of swine, those animals being regarded as under the special patronage of St Anthony of Padua. But this revenue, which was said to have amounted to as much as a thousand marks (£8,333), was now lost. Thus the income of the Bishop was seriously diminished, and the see became impoverished.†

Maybe it was Oldham's intimacy with Bishop Foxe of Winchester that made him appreciate the inconvenience of the similarity of the armorial bearings of their respective dioceses, and therefore induced him finally to differentiate those of Exeter. The ancient and commonly used Exeter shield bore a sword in bend, surmounted by two keys addorsed in bend sinister; Winchester having the same charges, similarly marshalled and blazoned, except that one of those at Winchester was silver, while both the Exeter keys were gold. Since the time of Bishop Bothe, however, a somewhat different disposition of the charges had been in occasional use, and this was adopted by Oldham as the official coat, and has been accepted ever since, *viz.*, "Gules, a sword erect in pale argent, pommelled and hilted or, surmounted by two keys in saltire of the last."‡

His death occurred in 1519, and the most gorgeously bedizened tomb in the Cathedral is that which this bishop prepared for himself in St Saviour's Chapel in the south choir aisle. The chantry is profusely adorned with Tudor emblems, among which the owls of his armorial bearings figure pro-

* *Register*, Part II, 14, 51.

† *The Real Vesey*, 10.

‡ Oliver's *Bishops*, 269; *Exeter Cathedral*, 65; *Devon Notes and Queries*, VI, 232, 236.

minently, a rebus of his name being formed by an owl bearing in its beak a scroll inscribed with the legend "dom." His body rests beneath a fully vested and richly coloured effigy, and the pious gratitude of Corpus Christi College at Oxford ensures that their benefactor's tomb shall be well cared for.* At this spot he had provided that a daily Mass should be said for his soul, having set aside £80 (£1,100) for the purpose, and the Priest Vicars had bound both themselves and their successors to continue the service for ever; and he had likewise agreed with the Dean and Canons for his annual obit. Furthermore, he had appointed his old friend, Bishop Foxe, his Suffragan Bishop, Dean Veysey, and others as his executors; and they were to arrange funeral offices for him in all the Religious Houses of the city, as well as at Canonsleigh, Polslo, Montacute, and Manchester, and at Brasenose, Corpus, and Durham Colleges at Oxford.†

* *Exeter Cathedral*, 64.

† Wills, P.C.C., Ayloffe, 19.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE REFORMATION PERIOD.

IF the career of John Harman, or Veysey, was signally and almost uniformly successful, this was not owing to any high connection by birth, for his father William Harman was merely a country gentleman of good standing, residing at Sutton Coldfield in Warwickshire. Nor was it to be accounted for by any special saintliness of character, or fame for scholarship, or great qualities as an ecclesiastic. Rather he seems to have owed his rapid advance in life to the friendship of Thomas Wolsey, and to his own skilful *addresse*, whereby he won the favour of King Henry VIII. He and Wolsey, who was his junior by a few years, were together at Oxford, gaining their fellowships at Magdalen College at about the same time; and soon after benefices and ecclesiastical dignities were showered on John Veysey—for he had now adopted the surname of his earliest teacher, who was probably a kinsman.

Among many other posts he held the important livings of St Mary's at Chester and St Michael's at Coventry; he occupied canons' stalls at Exeter (with the precentorship) and Salisbury and St Stephen's, Westminster; he was Chancellor of the diocese of Lichfield, and Archdeacon of Chester and of Barnstaple; and at one time he enjoyed the revenues of the four deaneries of Exeter, the Chapel Royal, Windsor, and Wolverhampton. In addition to all his ecclesiastical appointments he was also Registrar of the Order of the Garter and a Commissioner on the Inquisition on Enclosures, and at a later date Henry VIII made him President of the Council of the Marches of Wales. Thus when, by his papal provision, Leo X in 1519 promoted him from the deanery to the bishopric of Exeter, he was a prominent personage in Church and State, and at least by name well

known to the nation; and such was his tact and practical sagacity, that he managed to continue in the royal favour, notwithstanding the fall of his patron Wolsey, and the divorce of Queen Katharine, whose cause he had upheld and whose daughter Mary he had tutored. Doubtless the part that he played in a great public controversy stood him in good stead; for he won favour for himself from both King and Parliament by his defence of Dr Standish in his opposition to Abbot Kidderminster, who had advanced very extreme views concerning "benefit of clergy."*

As a diocesan, Veysey at first displayed diligence in visiting his diocese; but after a few years his absences became more and more prolonged, and he left the performance of his duties to assistant bishops. Meanwhile he himself spent his time at Court, or in his own house of Moor Hall at Sutton Coldfield, where he lived in great state, his household expenses amounting, it is said, to the enormous sum of £1,500 (£20,412) a year. Indeed, from the time of the building of that mansion in 1527 he made that his permanent place of dwelling; and the abuse was so patent, that Bishop Latimer did not scruple to attack him in a sermon preached before Edward VI in 1550 for his continuous non-residence and neglect of duty.†

That this attack was no baseless one is evidenced by the entries in the Register, which prove that, having personally officiated twice in his cathedral at the commencement of his time, he conducted only three other Ordination services—in his Palace Chapel on Easter Eve 1523, in Crediton Church in Advent of the same year, and in his chapel at Clyst on Easter Eve 1525. All the others were left to his representatives—Thomas Chard, Bishop of Solubria, and Thomas Vivian, Bishop of Megara, who after the first dozen years gave place to William Fawell, Bishop of Hippo and at the same time Archdeacon of Totnes and Vicar of Probus.‡

In one other respect besides non-residence episcopacy in England was in an unsatisfactory condition, for dioceses were few and some of them of enormous extent. Both evils

* G. G. Perry, II, 23.

† *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, LVIII, 296; *The Real Vesey*, 14.

‡ *Register*; *Reg. Sacrum Angl.*, 146-148.

were very pronounced, but, if the former continued unchecked, some efforts were made to provide an antidote for the latter. In 1532 Henry VIII obtained from the Pope a bull empowering him to found six new sees, and to secure the necessary funds by dissolving some Religious Houses. The execution of this scheme was deferred till after the general suppression of monasteries, but meanwhile an attempt was made to extend the episcopate by appointing a considerable number of coadjutor bishops. For this purpose the Suffragan Bishops Act was passed in 1534, which provided for the establishing of 26 "suffragans of the realm," each of whom might hold two benefices "for the better maintenance of his dignity." The needs of the large diocese of Exeter were recognised by the inclusion of Molton and St German's in the list of proposed titles; but those actually appointed numbered only fourteen, and unhappily they did not include either of those west country places, though the King himself had planned to appropriate for the latter the revenues of Launceston, Bodmin, and another Religious House.*

No doubt Bishop Veysey was well content to publish the mandate of Archbishop Warham in 1526, requiring his suffragans to make inquisition for all copies of the New Testament in English, whether the whole or particular books, some with and some without comments. They were declared to be tainted with Lutheranism, and were to be delivered up to the bishops or their representatives in order that they might be burnt. Tyndale's translation was specially aimed at, but other biblical and religious works were included under the ban, several of them being from Luther's pen.† Another archiepiscopal mandate—that of Cranmer in 1535—would be received with very different emotions. It was a covering letter, enclosing a command from the King that all bishops and archdeacons were to abstain from holding any Visitations until the royal Visitors should have completed their Visitation of the Religious Houses. This was quickly followed by a further command for the obtaining of full

* Gee and Hardy, 253; G. G. Perry, II, 137; *Royal Instit. of Cornwall Trans.*, VIII, 23.

† *Concilia*, Wilkins, III, 706; G. G. Perry, II, 38.

information as to the yearly value of all spiritual and temporal possessions "appertaining to any man of dignity, monastery, priory, church collegiate, church conventual, parsonage, vicarage, chantry, free chapel, or other dignity, office, or promotion spiritual within this realm."*

In 1538 Veysey held a Visitation of his diocese, during which he pressed upon his clergy several matters which show that he had advanced some way along the path of moderate reform, and that to some extent he had adopted Cranmer's Erastian views. Once every quarter at the least they were to set forth the title of the King as "supreme head under God of the Church of England both of spirituality and temporality," and were to endeavour to "utterly abolish and extirpate the usurped power of the bishop of Rome." They were to obtain copies of the New Testament in Latin and English, and to compare one chapter in them every day, "perusing the same with studious diligence," and learning some portion by heart. Every Sunday they were to expound in English or Cornish the Epistle, Gospel, Pater-noster, Ave Maria, Creed, or Decalogue, or some portion of the same, the *Institution of a Christian Man* being recommended as a guide; and, if the benefice was worth over £20 (£269), a sermon was to be provided once every three months. The irregularities or abuses that had to be condemned were clandestine marriages; solemn watch-nights or drinkings at the time of funerals (this evil being especially noticeable in Cornwall); and a tendency on the part of the clergy to "use or frequent to taverns or ale-houses, or to play at dice, cards, tables, or other damned or unlawful games." It is noticeable that Veysey was much in advance of Bonner; for four years later, when the Reformation movement had made greater progress, the latter in his somewhat similar charge to the London clergy about the study of the New Testament made no mention of the English translation; and in a list of prohibited books he included Tyndale's version of the New Testament.†

In the following year he had to find fault with super-

* *Concilia*, Wilkins, III, 797, 799.

† *Concilia*, Wilkins, III, 844, 864.

stition prevalent in the archdeaconry of Exeter—many artificers, husbandmen, and labourers continued to observe holy days that had been abolished, and refused to do any work thereon; and they persisted in doing the like on Saturday afternoons, "even as though they were Jews." This was a hindrance and loss to other persons, even as was the case also when "some shoesmiths be so fondly and superstitiously set to worship Saint Lewis's day, that in that day they will not shoe any man's horse, whatsoever need that shall fall to occupy the same." Similarly complaints, too, were brought against fishermen and carriers of hay. Directions were therefore given to the Archdeacon that he was to call upon his clergy to reason with their people, pointing out that their action was both unlawful and uncharitable, and warning them that future offenders would be punished.*

It was recognised about this time that there was too much extravagance in the clerical world as regards food, and therefore an attempt was made in 1541 to curb excess by the issue of dietary regulations. Quaint restrictions were agreed upon by the archbishops and most of the bishops, "as also of divers grave men, both deans and archdeacons," and affected the clergy of our diocese as much as those elsewhere—which probably meant very little. It was decreed that an archbishop "should never excede six divers kyndes of fleshe, or six of fishe on the fishe dayes"; while a bishop was limited to five dishes, a dean or archdeacon to four, and any other cleric to three. A "dish" was defined as consisting of "one of the greater fyshes or fowles, as crane, swan, turkey-cocke, hadocke, pyke, tench; and of lesse sortes but two, *viz.* capons, pheasantes, conies, wodcockes"; but an ordinary clergyman might have as one dish two partridges or three blackbirds or twelve larks or snipe. Furthermore, "the archbishop myght have of second dishes four, the bishop three, and al others but two; as custard, tart, fritter, cheese, or apples, peares, or two of other kyndes of fruites." It was charmingly thoughtful of the legislators to conclude with the direction that "whatsoever is spared by the cuttyng of of the olde superfluitie, should yet be

* *Concilia*, Wilkins, III, 846.

provided and spent in playne meates for the relievyng of the poore." But so detailed a code of sumptuary laws could hardly be expected to be more than utopian; and it is not surprising to learn that after the order had been kept for two or three months, " by the disusyng of certaine wylfull persons it came to the olde excesse."*

Even in the early part of Veysey's episcopate England abounded with would-be religious reformers, a number of whom were burnt at the stake. One such case occurred in our diocese in 1532, the sufferer being Thomas Benet, who thus shared the fate that had befallen his friend Thomas Bilney a few years before at Norwich. A Cambridge Master of Arts, and a schoolmaster first at Torrington and then at Exeter, he published his protest against the generally accepted teaching of the Church by posting on the doors of the Cathedral his opinion, that " The Pope is Antichrist, and we ought to worship God onely, and no Saints." For this he was condemned, and, a writ *de heretico comburendo* having been issued to Sir Thomas Denys, the barbarously cruel punishment was enacted at Liverydole, outside the city, the poor victim continuing steadfast to the end.†

It speaks much for the reality and fervour of the religious convictions of the people in the west that, of all the dioceses of England, the one that was most deeply stirred by the dissolution of monasteries was the diocese of Exeter, especially when it is borne in mind that the number of Religious Houses in Devon and Cornwall was small, when compared with some other parts of the country. The year 1549 brought acute anxiety to the rulers of England, for in that summer reports reached them of rebellions or risings in as many as sixteen counties; but of all those the outbreaks in the south-west were more closely connected with religion than any of the others. Not even the Pilgrimage of Grace of 1536 was more religious in its origin and character than were the Cornish Rising and the Devonshire Rising of thirteen years later. They, indeed, were the direct outcome of the changes effected

* *Concilia*, Wilkins, III, 862.

† G. G. Perry, II, 39; *Historic Towns—Exeter*, 100; *Suburbs of Exeter*, 29; *Book of Martyrs*, II, 310.

in Church services and ceremonies and the destruction of objects of veneration; but, underlying it all, was the long existing discontent and wrath caused by the closing of those holy places and the ejection of their occupants, feelings that were accentuated by the consequent raising of rents and depreciation of the value of money and flooding of the labour-market.

In Cornwall there was a previous outbreak in the year before the great Rising, and it was a case of iconoclasm at Helston which was the spark that caused the conflagration. It is a strange history, and one that gives a saddening insight into Church abuses of that age, but also an illuminating illustration of the common people's love for their old Church. It seems that one Thomas Wynter, a son of Cardinal Wolsey and altogether a very unworthy person, had the luck to have bestowed upon him in 1537 the Archdeaconry of Cornwall. This he at once leased for a term of thirty-five years to a layman, William Body, who was to pay him £150 (£2,020) then, and £30 (£404) a year out of the revenues. Three years later the Bishop summoned Wynter to appear at Penryn to answer a charge of evil living, and he was further accused of letting to farm the ecclesiastical and spiritual jurisdiction of his archdeaconry to a layman. Body, however, secured royal support, and continued to enjoy possession of the archdeaconry for some years longer. Then, in the autumn of 1547, he was specially commissioned by the new Government to carry into effect their ordinances concerning ecclesiastical reforms in the churches and chapels of Cornwall. The method that he adopted was to summon the clergy and churchwardens of the district to assemble at Penryn to hear the Injunctions of Edward VI (the first set, issued in 1547). It was an impolitic action, and we can imagine how incensed his audience would be, as they listened not only to the forbidding of all processions, of the burning of candles before images or pictures, and of the ringing of the sanctus bell, but also to the command :—" They shall take away, utterly extinct and destroy all shrines, covering of shrines, all tables, candlesticks, trindles or rolls of wax, pictures, paintings, and all other monuments of feigned

miracles, pilgrimages, idolatry and superstition: so that there remain no memory of the same in walls, glass windows, or elsewhere within their churches or houses." In consequence there was a hostile demonstration of so threatening a nature that Body had to be recalled for a while.*

In the following spring, however, he was back again in Cornwall, bringing a letter from the Council, in which he was charged to have removed all images remaining in any church or chapel. With this intent he visited Helston on April 5th, 1548, and there the storm burst. For the whole country side was roused, and men came pouring in from surrounding parishes, some from St Keverne and Constantine being specially active as ringleaders; and Body, who had begun to destroy the images in the church, was caught and slain, being stabbed with a knife by some unidentified person, and dispatched by William Kylter, a husbandman of Constantine, and Pascho Trevian, a sailor of St Keverne. The multitude was afterwards harangued by John Ressiegh, a yeoman of Helston, whose closing words give the sum and substance of the people's grievance and demand:—"Let us have again all such laws and ordinances touching the Christian religion as were appointed by our late sovereign lord, King Henry the Eighth, of blessed memory, (God rest his soul!) and none other, until the King's Majesty that now is accomplish the age of four-and-twenty years; and whosoever dare defend this Body and follow such new fashions as he did, we will punish him likewise."

After much difficulty a number of men were arraigned at Launceston. The murder was brought home to James Robert of St Keverne, mariner, and he was condemned to be hanged. Kylter and Trevian and seven others were convicted of high treason, and were to be drawn on hurdles through Launceston to the gallows and hanged, and while still alive to be thrown to the ground, their entrails removed and burnt before their eyes, their heads cut off, and their bodies quartered, the parts being fixed up in various towns as a warning to all men. Five others were sent up to London for trial, but they escaped execution, with the exception of

* *Concilia*, Wilkins, IV, 3; *Western Rebellion*, 47, 57, 71.

Martin Geffrey, Vicar of St Keverne. He was drawn from the Tower to Smithfield, and treated in the same barbarous and cruel fashion as his fellows at Launceston, his head being set on London Bridge and his quarters on four gates of the city. Long ere this, by the resignation of his archdeaconry in 1543, Thomas Wynter had vanished from the history of the diocese—if indeed he can be said to have even figured in its pages, for, though holding the title for nearly six years, he had occupied the post for only a month before leasing the office to Body.*

In the following year (1549) occurred the greater and more serious Cornish Rising, its place of origin being Bodmin, and the first commencement dating from June 6th. What was the final cause of the outburst is not apparent, but the whole ecclesiastical atmosphere of England was charged with electricity, and the storm that had been brewing for long meant the marshalling of the forces of the unreformed religion against the reformed. Several thousand men were mustered at Bodmin ; the leadership was accepted, somewhat unwillingly, by Humphrey Arundell, a landed squire of Helland ; a set of Articles was drawn up, containing their demands, and sent to the King ; and then they set out for London, in order that by the exercise of force they might lay their case before his Majesty and get security for the redress of their grievances. There was probably but little of military orderliness and drill, as the variously armed troops marched eastwards ; but there was more than picturesque beauty, for there was the outward display of heartfelt religion, as there floated above them the banner of the Five Wounds of Christ, and before them was carried " (as the Jews did the ark of God, in the times of old) the pyx or consecrated host borne under a canopy, with crosses, banners, candlesticks, holy bread and water, to defend them from devils and the adverse power." A detachment was sent to besiege Plymouth, and on their way they captured Trematon Castle, which was held against them by Sir Richard Grenville ; but, though they succeeded in occupying the town, they found Plymouth Castle too strong for them, so most of them

* *Western Rebellion*, 74-96.

made their way *via* Tavistock to Launceston, and thence on to join the main body at Crediton.

Meanwhile the standard of revolt had been unfurled in Devon, the immediate reason being the Act of Uniformity of 1549, which was passed on January 21st, and enacted that cathedral and parish churches were to purchase before Whitsunday a copy of the English *Book of Common Prayer*, and were to take it into sole use within three weeks of such purchase. In most places the new departure seems to have been made on that festival itself, which occurred in that year on June 9th; and certainly this was done in the church of Sampford Courtenay by William Harper, the rector. Of course he wore the accustomed vestments; for no alteration in that respect had yet been made, and the First Prayer Book of Edward VI contained the plain rubrical direction:—"At the time appointed for the ministration of the holy Communion, the Priest that shall execute the holy ministry, shall put upon him the vesture appointed for that ministration, that is to say: a white Albe plain, with a vestment or cope." Not until three years later was any mention made of a surplice; and therefore to celebrate in 1549 in anything else than the rich vesture of olden times would not only be without precedent or parallel, but would also be plainly illegal. But to the people of Sampford Courtenay the service seemed strange. The doctrine, indeed, was the same, and the main idea or spirit of the office, and also the general outline and the chief features; but the Latin language, partly shelved in the *Order of the Communion* of a year before, was now entirely abolished; the arrangement of the service was altered in details; and a number of minor ceremonies or actions, which used to serve as helpful indications, showing what point had been reached in the service, would be watched for in vain. Naturally, the worshippers were baffled, puzzled, estranged; for sudden and sweeping innovations in public worship do not readily commend themselves to simple folk; and the congregation of Sampford Courtenay were set against the English Prayer Book.

Now, it was only three days earlier that the trouble had broken out at Bodmin, and by that Sunday tidings must

have travelled thus far, encouraging the villagers to rouse themselves to action. Anyhow, on the morrow—a public holiday—when the rector was about to enter the church, he was stopped by a crowd of people, headed by Thomas Underhill, tailor, and William Segar, labourer, who demanded of him which service he was going to use. On his replying that he was bound by law to have the new book, they declared that they would not permit it; whereupon he succumbed—whether willingly or not, we cannot tell—and gave them the Latin rite once more. The news was quickly bruited about, and the local justices, Alexander Wood from North Tawton, Sir Hugh Pollard from King's Nympton, and others, came on the scene with intent to browbeat the rustics. But the latter refused to be cowed or talked over; and when William Hellyons, a gentleman of their own parish, boldly rebuked them for their rebellion, "they fell in a rage with him, and not only with evil words reviled him, but also, as he was going out of the Church-house and going down the stairs, one of them named Lithibridge (*i.e.*, Lethbridge) with a bill struck him on the neck, and immediately, notwithstanding his pitiful requests and lamentations, a number of the rest fell upon him and slew him and cut him in small pieces."*

The action of the men of Sampford Courtenay was generally approved, and many others joined them in their march to Crediton, where they united with the Cornish army, and together they advanced against Exeter. They had some hopes that the city would admit them, for there were many within the walls who sympathized with their principles, even including the Mayor, John Blackaller; but, though a number of individuals came out to them, the civic authorities remained loyal to the King and Council. It was on July 2nd that the city was encompassed and the gates closed, and again we read of the impressive ceremonial—the religious procession approaching the walls with its sacred banner, and the pyx borne beneath its rich canopy, and the swinging censers; the company of priests, too, robed and singing as they advanced, and the acolytes carrying their big candles. It was just such

* *Western Rebellion*, 131; *Gleanings from Records of Exeter*, 49; Gee and Hardy, 365.

a sight as may be seen at this day, not in Cornwall or Devon, but in Brittany at the celebration of a local festival or *pardon*. But at Exeter the ecclesiastics were followed by a herald, who after a flourish of trumpets called upon the inhabitants to surrender. The Mayor, however, answered back that they would be true to their allegiance and obey the laws that had been promulgated concerning religion. For five weeks the siege continued, and the citizens suffered much privation, one consequence being that holy vessels of most of the parish churches were sold, some of the money being given to the poor, and some being taken for paying the soldiers.

The attacking forces were marshalled under a Council of War consisting of nine leaders, *viz.*, three Cornish gentlemen—Humphrey Arundell of Helland, John Wynslade of Pelynt, and Thomas Holmes of Blisland; three Devonshire gentlemen—Sir Thomas Pomeroy of Berry Pomeroy, John Bury of Hartland, and one of the Coffin family; and three representatives of the people—Thomas Underhill, John Sloeman, and William Segar, all of Sampford Courtenay. Besides these, there were eight Governors of Camps, of whom two, John Tompson and Roger Barret, were priests, while Henry Bray and Henry Lee were mayors respectively of Bodmin and Torrington. One important work occupied their attention during the siege, namely, the redrafting of their demands, and sending to the King "The Articles of us the Commoners of Devonshyre and Cornewall in divers Campes by East and West of Excettor." The principal demands were these:—the Mass to be in Latin as before, and celebrated by the priest without communicants, save on Easter Day, and then the people to be communicated in one kind only; the Reserved Sacrament to be hung over the high altar again, and to be worshipped by all; Baptism to be freely ministered on week-days as well as Sundays; all old ceremonies to be restored, such as holy bread and holy water every Sunday, and palms and ashes at their proper times, and images to be set up again in every church; the old Latin services of Mattins, Evensong, and Litany to be used again, and the special prayers for souls in purgatory; all English Scriptures to be withdrawn; and half of the abbey

and chantry lands to be given back to the Church. Here was magnificent testimony of the intense love for their religion, which moved those men to risk their very lives in the effort to win back the devotional practices to which they had always been accustomed, and which they valued so highly. Whether we approve their demands or not, many of us of this more apathetic and unheroic age are overwhelmed with admiration and envy, as we contemplate this spectacle of religious fervour, and we sympathetically grieve over the ecclesiastical disaster of that time and the sad fate that befell those devoted churchmen. Very illuminating too is it to notice that this was entirely a laymen's movement, not instigated, though supported, by the clergy. Indeed, the Church's leaders kept themselves very much in the background ; and we cannot help wishing that the venerable Bishop of Exeter, instead of living at his ease in his Warwickshire manor-house, had been present in his diocese, ready either to offer wise counsel to his flock, or to share their forlorn hope and their martyrdom.

Meanwhile, however, Lord Russell, who had been charged by the Council with the task of crushing the rebellion and had been awaiting reinforcements at Honiton, found himself able to take the field. In the battles of Fenny Bridges and Clyst Heath the rebels were defeated and lost heavily, so that they had no choice but to raise the siege and retreat westwards, leaving the way open for the royal troops to enter the city on August 6th. Routed again with great slaughter at Sampford Courtenay, and then their last oppositions overcome at Launceston and at King's Weston in Somerset, the Rising was ended, and it only remained to take vengeance on the leaders—which was done with awful thoroughness and barbarity.*

A signal instance of undue and cruel severity was the case of Robert Welsh, Vicar of St Thomas's in the suburbs of Exeter. A native of Penryn, of " good honest parentage," he was, it is true, a favourer of the unreformed religion and an adherent of the movers of sedition. He had also figured prominently as the chief instigator of the condemnation

* *Excester*, Hoker, 33-88.

of a spy, who was hanged on Exe Island. But, on the other hand, when he learned that a skilful artilleryman was about to fire red-hot cannon-balls into the city in order to destroy the whole place by setting alight the wooden houses, he collected some soldiers, and, hastening to St David's Down, peremptorily forbade the destruction. "Do what you can," he cried, "by policy, by force, or by dint of sword, and I will join you and do my uttermost. But to burn the city, which would be hurtful to all and profitable to none, I will not consent thereto, but will withstand you with all my power." His remonstrances were altogether efficacious, but his magnanimity did not condone his offences; for, after the siege was over, he was condemned to suffer as a traitor, and that in most tragic fashion. Gallows were erected on the top of the tower of his own church, and by a rope tied round his waist the poor man was hauled up, and there hanged in chains, habited in full vestments, and with symbols of his sacred office fastened to his person—a holy water vessel with asperge, a sacring bell, and a rosary. This profane and ribald spectacle was displayed before the eyes of all, and the horrid exhibition was continued for nearly four years, until religious reverence asserted its influence at the accession of Queen Mary.*

For about two hundred years the anniversary of the raising of the siege of Exeter was kept in perpetual remembrance by an annual sermon preached on August 6th, which was commonly known as Jesus Day, the next day being marked in the Calendar as "Name of Jesus." The observance consisted in the Mayor attending the Cathedral, accompanied by the officials of the city, the sermon being preached by the Mayor's chaplain.†

Of the whole event the historian of the Western Rebellion, Mrs Rose-Troup, gives this admirable summing-up. "It cannot but be admitted that the Western Rebellion was no insignificant affair. But when we come to consider the consequences which would have ensued if the rebels had advanced to London and had been joined by the disaffected

* *Western Rebellion*, 205, 274, 292; *Excester*, Hoker, 85.

† *Devon Notes and Queries*, V, 93; *Hist. of Exeter*, Jenkins, 119.

from other parts of the realm, as would not have been improbable, it is not too much to say that the almost forgotten victory of Fenny Bridges was a decisive battle in English history. That the success of the rebels would have wholly prevented the Reformation, as we style it, is more than can be claimed, but there can be little doubt that it would have given its progress a serious, though momentary, check." *

The see of Exeter had been stripped of manor after manor, and at last the royal commands touched the Bishop himself, for in August 1551 he was ordered by the Privy Council to surrender his see to the King, an order which so terrified him that he obeyed, and was rewarded by the grant of a pension of £485 (£6,402). With that and his own private fortune he was able to live in luxury in his mansion at Moor Hall, devoting himself and much of his money to public works for the benefit of Sutton Coldfield,—a park, a hall, a market, a Grammar School, new aisles for the Church, and other generous gifts.†

What an entire contrast to his predecessor was the new Bishop! Miles Coverdale, a Yorkshireman and an *alumnus* of the University of Cambridge, had been an Austin friar in that town, but had abandoned the life of a Religious in order to pass as a secular priest; and later, when well over fifty years of age, he had married a wife. He had also joined himself, hand and glove, with the advanced reforming party in England, and besides had spent many years in close association with the Protestants in Switzerland, Germany, and Holland. Thus he was fully prepared to push on the changes in religion that had been commenced in the diocese of Exeter, and to pull down much that Bishop Veysey had loved and cherished.

The reasons assigned for his being selected for the vacant see are "his extraordinary knowledge in divinity and his unblemished character"; and of course his fame is due to his literary work, rather than to his Exeter episcopate, which lasted only two years. True, he figured but little as an author, but his name will be for ever renowned as the

* *Western Rebellion*, 410.

† *Hist. of Sutton Coldfield*, 14-19.

first translator into English of the whole Bible—a valuable work indeed, though its value has generally not been fully recognised, as it has been regarded as merely a translation from Latin and German versions. That, indeed, was the character claimed by the first issue, which was printed abroad, probably at Zurich, in 1535; but in later issues he declares that he had followed five good versions, though he does not specify them. This indefinite reference was probably a "blind," to cover the fact that his version was largely based on Tyndale's translation of the Pentateuch and the New Testament. But to avow that openly would have been perilous; for Tyndale's work, which was the "fons et origo" of all subsequent English versions (except the Douay), had been condemned by King and Bishops, and his volumes were to be seized and publicly burnt. Coverdale had a hand, too, in the version known as Matthew's Bible (1537), Thomas Matthew being a *nom de plume* of John Rogers, who was afterwards the proto-martyr of the Marian persecution; and further, Thomas Cromwell induced him to take a principal part in issuing in 1539 that which on account of its size is designated the Great Bible, though it is sometimes called Cranmer's Bible, because that Primate wrote an introduction to the second of the seven editions. On the title-page of the Great Bible the contents are described as "truly translated after the veryte of the Hebrew and Greke textes by the dylygent studye of dyverse excellent learned men expert in the foresayde tonges." The chief of those "learned men" was Tyndale, but as his name was anathema to Henry and most of the bishops, it could not be mentioned, so it had to be camouflaged. Coverdale's contribution to the *Paraphrase of Erasmus* (1549) was the Epistles to the Romans, the Corinthians, and the Galatians; but, though he published many more works in after years, he passed nothing through the press during the brief period of his Exeter episcopate. What he accomplished was indeed important, but he did not give to the world much that was original, his genius being chiefly limited to translations, almost all of which were connected with Biblical literature.

Coverdale had previously made acquaintance with the

diocese of Exeter, having accompanied Lord Russell on his expedition to quell the Devonshire Rising in 1549. He filled the *rôle* of army chaplain, his function being that of a preacher, and he delivered a sermon on Clyst Heath immediately after the victory of the royal troops. The statement of Strype that "Coverdale afterwards became coadjutor to Voysey, the bishop of Exeter, who seldom resided, and took little care of his diocese," must be erroneous, for Coverdale was not then in episcopal orders. It may be that a commission, whereby he was intruded into the diocese to help to still the disaffection existing after the Rising, was regarded as the work of a coadjutor of the Bishop.*

On August 14th, 1551, Veysey was forced to resign, and Coverdale was appointed his successor by royal Letters Patent, the consecration taking place on the 30th at Croydon at the hands of Archbishop Cranmer. The arrangement had been planned more than a year before, as is apparent from a letter of Peter Martyr, written to Henry Bullinger from Oxford on June 1st, 1550, in which he announces that "Michael Coverdale is to be made bishop of Exeter." This was entirely to the liking of the advanced party of the reformers, for he adds:—"Nothing can be more convenient and conducive to the reformation of religion than the advancement of such men to the government of the Church."†

At the same time Scory was consecrated to Rochester, the assistant bishops being Ridley of London and Hodgkins of Bedford; and Strype noted that all wore surplices and copes, particular mention being made of Coverdale, as though his consenting to be so vested was specially remarkable. He also tells us that, out of consideration for his poverty, he was excused the paying of first fruits to the King.‡ In the Letters Patent King Edward is made to declare that Coverdale "on account of his exceptional knowledge of holy writ and most upright habits is a suitable man for the place

* Strype's *Memorials*, II, 116, 348; *Gleanings from Records of Exeter*, 64; *Western Rebellion*, 138, 158, 171, 256, 267; *Excester*, Hoker, 74; *Trans. of Devon Assoc.*, X, 209.

† *Orig. Letters*, Parker Soc., II, 483.

‡ *Memorials*, II, 348, 363.

and office"—rather meagre qualifications for a successful bishop. He also states that the revenue of the see had been reduced from £1,566 (£20,671) to £500 (£6,600), "diminished" (so he ungraciously and untruthfully avers) "by John the late Bishop, at our request and licence." Maybe, the smallness of the stipend was responsible for the choice of Coverdale, for a well-to-do secular clergyman would find it difficult to live as a bishop on £500 a year, but it would not be such a hardship to one who had been inured to simple habits as an Augustinian friar.*

As a bishop he seems to have been greatest in the pulpit, being popular as a preacher; but in other ways he showed no remarkable ability, though a man of excellent life and character, and conscientious and devoted in the discharge of his duties, besides being hospitable and generous. In particular, we are told, he was regular in preaching twice a week besides Holy Days in one or other of the churches in Exeter, save when in attendance in the House of Lords. His theological views, however, were obnoxious to many, especially among the humbler classes; and Hoker, who lived in Exeter at the time, speaks of the exhibition of people's disapproval by "open railings and false libels and secret backbitings," which even led them to the length of attempting his death by poison.†

Of the details of his diocesan work we know but little. Almost at once he undertook a Visitation of his Cathedral and diocese, the mandate being issued to the dean and the four archdeacons not by himself but by King Edward VI on his behalf—a striking innovation; but there are no records of the accomplishment of this work, though we learn that he penetrated Cornwall at least as far as Egloshayle. He had no assistant bishop, but he himself conducted his six Ordinations, three in his palace chapel and three in the Cathedral; and, when he was not in Exeter, the institutions, which were remarkably few, numbering only 47 in all, were performed by his commissaries or vicars general, Thomas Herle and Robert Weston.

* *Devon Notes and Queries*, X, 293.

† Hoker's *Bishops*, 139.

Church life was strong in Plymouth in early Edwardian days, and the Mayor and inhabitants sent their petition to Lord North, begging that they might be allowed an adequate staff of ministers. They represented that Plymouth had at least 2,500 communicants, many of whom lived far from their church, some being as much as three miles away; and for their spiritual needs there used to be, besides the vicar, an assistant curate and two chantry priests. For the past seven years the curate had been charged with the duty of preaching four times a week—on Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, and Friday; and the chantry priests had had too much to do, one being responsible for baptisms and purifications (*i.e.*, churching of women), and the other for visitation of the sick and burials. As for Vicar Payne, he had leased his house for sixty years to a London gentleman—his action being ratified by the King and by the Bishop—and had gone away, no man knew where, leaving the parish to look after itself. They had therefore been obliged to engage other priests to assist; and now, as a result of the Act of 1545, which conferred all chantries on the Crown, they had lost the services of the two chantry priests, so that the curate was left single-handed, and was not able to cope with the work, or even one half of it. Therefore they petitioned that two priests might be provided, who should share the duties with the curate. Alas! how sadly crippled was the poor Church of England by some of the secularizing legislation of that time!*

The premature death of Edward VI on July 6th, 1553, altered everything. A couple of months after the accession of Queen Mary, Coverdale was removed to make way for the return of the aged Veysey, who was restored by Letters Patent; and Haynes's successor, Dean Haddon, whose installation had occurred almost on the very day of the King's decease, had to give place to Thomas Reynolds. After a brief term of imprisonment Coverdale was permitted to retire to Denmark; but in safer times he returned, and took part in the consecration of Archbishop Parker, and for a few years held a London benefice. Exeter however saw him no more, and it is remarkable that his restoration to his see

* *Devon Notes and Queries*, VII, 75.

was not mooted, when Turberville was deprived in 1559. Probably his views were too pronounced to allow of that, especially his objection to vestments, his nonconformity having necessitated the resignation of his city living. The only memorial of him in the Exeter diocese is his figure in the modern glass of the great west window of the Cathedral; an honourable position that he merits, not for what he was or did as Bishop of Exeter, but for the fame that he gained as the author of that version of the Psalter, which is in common and daily use throughout the half-worldwide Anglican Communion.*

* *Register*, passim.

CHAPTER XV.

SPOLIATION OF THE CHURCH.

THERE were some quite patent abuses and irregularities that besmirched the monastic polity in England. But it would be a mistake to condemn the whole system because of those blots; for it must be borne in mind that, while transgressions and excesses are wont to attract attention, it is natural that little notice should be bestowed on those who spend a law-abiding and well disciplined life. Instances of both were to be found in the conventual history of the Exeter diocese, and we must not allow ourselves to forget the religious and peaceful and prosperous conditions that prevailed at Torre and Buckfast, at St German's and St Nicholas's, Exeter, though more blatant and sensational were the rebellious behaviour of Tavistock, the extravagance of Plympton, the impecuniosity of Totnes, and the worldliness of Bodmin.

The signs of the times warned people of what was at least the probable fate of the monasteries; and it became usual for the head of a Religious House on the eve of the Dissolution to endeavour to safeguard the interests of his community, or at least to make immediate profit, by leasing the conventual property for a term of years. Plympton is a signal instance of this, for the bargains that the Prior entered into were very numerous. The tithes of the appropriated churches he leased for twenty-one or twenty-five or even thirty-five years; and in some cases a deduction was made for the incumbent—whereby we learn incidentally that at that time a vicar's stipend ranged from £8 to £6 (£108 to £81). For instance, the tithes of Plympton St Mary were let for £74 (£997) per annum, £16 (£216) being allowed for the maintenance of two priests, and those of Sampford Spiney for twenty-five years at £9 6s. 8d. (£126), £6 (£81) being

for the incumbent, while a twenty-one years' lease of the Plymouth tithes was to bring in £15 (£202). The leases of *temporalia* were frequently of longer duration—forty, eighty, and even eighty-nine years, or in many cases the term of life of the lessee. These transactions must have added considerably to the business difficulties incident to the Dissolution, and while some of them the responsible agents found it advisable to allow, the majority seem to have been quashed.

We fail to discover proofs of gross immorality, such as is commonly laid to the charge of English monks and nuns of the early sixteenth century; and we cannot but believe that such an accusation would be false, for otherwise we should have come across notice of it in Bishop Veysey's *Register*. He did not fail to reprimand severely the canonesses of Cornworthy Priory, but their delinquencies took the form of neglect of their Rule rather than of infraction of the Seventh Commandment. Consequently he issued his mandate in 1521, in which he endeavoured to restore their discipline, expressing his "desyre to purge the slaunder that hath ensued yn your howse by trasgression of religion." He found it necessary therefore to remind them of "the thre substancialls of yor religion which ye have professed"; and to command that services should be attended by every one, that all should sleep in one common dormitory, "all severall chambers and backedores utterly excluded," that they should take their meals together in their refectory, "attendyng to yor contemplative lectour there to be redde," that they were to "use no pompos apparell," and that they should not "receve sugeners withowte our speciall licence."

The state of Bodmin Priory was even worse than that of Cornworthy, though there, too, it was not a case of corrupt morals. The canons had lost their sense of religious vocation, with the result that discipline had no hold over them, and they were ready to renounce their vows. The Prior, Thomas Vivian or Wannysworthe, was a man of distinction, for under the title of Bishop of Megara he was coadjutor to Bishop Veysey; and he wrote a despairing letter to Mr Lock, who was somehow connected with the Government:—"I am sore disquietid with a sort of unthryfty chanons, my convent,

and there berars, which of long contynuans have lyvyd unthriftili, and agene the gode order of relygyon to the grete sklaunder of the same, as all the contrey can tell." He added that the Bishop at his Visitation had laid down regulations for them, which were no harder than their proper Rule; but they were kicking against these, and were threatening to leave. Indeed, one had been on the point of departure, when the Prior stopped him; for, though he would be no loss, yet his going would be an evil precedent, which all the others would surely follow. There seemed to be no remedy less drastic than a total expulsion, with an entirely new start. The former took place very shortly afterwards, but, alas! there was no attempt to revive the lost ideals.

The closing chapter of the existence of Buckfast Abbey was a sad one, the unprincipled and time-serving Gabriel Donne being foisted upon the brethren as their abbot in order to prepare the way for the infliction of the *coup de grâce*. He had qualified himself—in the eyes of the State authorities alone—for his high office by the assistance that he rendered in the apprehending and condemning of Tyndale, whose death has been laid to his account; and for that he was rewarded with the abbacy of Buckfast. During his two years' tenure he alienated much of the monastic property—some of it on such long leases as sixty years; and then he surrendered the House to the King's Commissioners, his services being recognised by his receiving, with the Prior of Plympton, the largest pension accorded to the Heads of monasteries in the diocese.*

Before the Dissolution of Monasteries was taken in hand in 1536, several of the smaller Religious Houses in the Exeter diocese had already ceased to exist. The tiny Lammana and Minster had long before died of inanition; St James's Priory at Exeter had been merged in King's College, Cambridge; and Cowick had become a mere cell of Tavistock Abbey, even as Tresco had always been. Of the rest, Marsh Barton and St Anthony-in-Roseland were but small offshoots of Plympton Priory; Carswell and St Cyricus were dependents of Montacute Priory, St Michael's Mount of Sion Abbey,

* *Monast. Exon.*, 372; *Cistercian Houses of Devon*, 108.

Tregony of Merton Priory, Modbury of Eton College, and Pilton of Malmesbury Abbey. Furthermore, Barnstaple, Otterton, Totnes, Ipplepen, and Tywardreath were still reckoned as alien priories, though Henry VI had either ended or lessened the foreign domination over them. All these were counted as smaller Houses, as well as Frithelstock, Polslo, Cornworthy, and St Nicholas's at Exeter; and, as their incomes were below the limit of £200 (£2,694), they were included in the 376 that were suppressed by the Act for the Dissolution of the Lesser Monasteries, A.D. 1536. The wealthiest were Polslo (£164, *i.e.*, £2,209), St Nicholas's, Exeter (£147, *i.e.*, £1,980), and Frithelstock (£127, *i.e.*, £1,711); but some were quite poverty-stricken, such as Carswell (£29, *i.e.*, £390), Marsh Barton (£28, *i.e.*, £377), St Cyricus (£11, *i.e.*, £148), and Tregony (£6 13s. 4d., *i.e.*, £90). Most of them had very few inmates, Pilton with a prior and three monks being of ordinary size; but Tywardreath had as many as seven, and Polslo, with a prioress and twelve sisters, was unusually large—though nunneries were generally more numerously tenanted than houses of men.

Thirteen monasteries were left—Benedictine Tavistock and Premonstratensian Torre; the five Cistercian Abbeys of Buckfast, Forde, Dunkeswell, Newenham, and Buckland; and the six great Augustinian Houses—Hartland and Canonsleigh and Plympton in Devon, and Bodmin and Launceston and St German's Priories in Cornwall. These were among the 229 Greater Monasteries, most of which were surrendered to the King before 1539, the remainder being dealt with by the Act of that year. The two richest of the thirteen were Plympton (£912, *i.e.*, £12,284) and Tavistock (£902, *i.e.*, £12,149), next to them being the much less lucrative Buckfast (£466, *i.e.*, £6,277), Torre (£396, *i.e.*, £5,534), Forde (£374, *i.e.*, £5,038), and Launceston (£354, *i.e.*, £4,768). The professed were most numerous at Tavistock, which had 21 in all, and at Plympton, where were 19. Canonsleigh Nunnery had 18, Torre 16, and Forde 14. In proportion to their wealth, Buckfast was undermanned with 10, and Launceston with only 6.

These figures may appear to be small; but even they

are probably higher than they would have been a few years before, for the numbers of the greater Houses were swelled by the dissolution of the smaller ones, as some at least of those who had been expelled found accommodation there, especially those from dependent cells. But, in truth, an English monastery did not normally have many professed inmates, nor was it intended to accommodate any great number; and the reason that prompted the building of their stately churches was the idea of glorifying God and providing space for great functions, rather than any need of finding room for the brethren. At the Dissolution Tewkesbury had only 36 religious, Westminster 25, St Alban's 39, Bury St Edmund's 44, Christ Church at Canterbury 53, and St Augustine's, Canterbury, 31. These were the leading monasteries in the land, and probably their numbers were never greatly in excess of these figures—the full complements at the Canterbury Houses were only 75 and 60. Of those in the Exeter diocese the largest—Tavistock—had provision for only 21; and in several cases it was never contemplated that there would be more than the smallest communities, *e.g.*, Carswell was founded for four monks, St James's at Exeter for only five occupants, and some were to have but two.

For fixing the amount of pensions, we might have expected the grants to have been proportionate to either the importance of the House or the annual revenue; but no definite rule seems to have been followed, for, while the heads of Plympton and Buckfast were awarded £120 (£1,616) each, the sums for Tavistock and Launceston were £100 (£1,347), Forde £80 (£1,079), Bodmin and St German's £66 (£889), Hartland and Buckland £60 (£808). To Canonsleigh and Polslo were allotted only £40 (£539) and £30 (£404)—perhaps because their rulers were women. Some of the lesser Houses received very small amounts—Barnstaple £15 (£202), and Frithelstock only £13 (£175). In the chief monasteries the second official (prior or subprior) had a special allowance—£10 (£135) at Tavistock and Plympton and Launceston, £8 (£108) at Bodmin, £5 6s. 8d. (£72) at Polslo. For the ordinary brethren the sum varied from £8 (£108) to £2 (£27), the amount depending partly on the wealth of the House and partly on

the person's age or length of profession, the average being about £5 (£67) for men and £4 (£54) for women.* Occasionally an exceptional case received special consideration, such as that of Richard Luer of Bodmin, who was allowed "£10 (£135) and 6 dussen wodes yerly," as he was blind and a hundred years old. It is manifest that the payment of these few pensions would leave a rich balance to be enjoyed by the Crown; and also that much suffering must have ensued from turning out on the world a number of persons, who were not fitted for any secular calling, and had to struggle to support themselves on a totally inadequate income—less than a labourer's wage.

John Hoker, who was a boy of eleven at the time, and afterwards became a lawyer and Chamberlain of Exeter, has left us deeply interesting accounts of the Dissolution, which give a beautiful picture of the generous eleemosynary deeds of a city priory, and also a graphic description of the opposition aroused among the people by the spoliation of the churches that they had learned to love.

The first is entitled, "The order for the relieving of the poor people in the monastery of St Nicholas, late dissolved." In this occurs the following account. "There was within the said monastery a certain house, called the 'Poor Men's Parlour,' to the which place there repaired daily seven poor men before dinner-time, and to every one of them was delivered on the flesh days a two-penny loaf, a pottle of ale, and a piece of flesh; and if it happened that any of the said seven did not or could not come then, his part and portion should be sent unto him. And on the Fridays likewise at afternoon, as soon as dinner was done, all such poor as were tenants came, and every of them should have also a two-penny loaf, a pottle of ale, and a piece of fish, and a penny in money. And if it happened that any of the said poor did not or could not come to the said parlour at the time prefixed, then his part or portion should be sent unto him. And likewise, at the after dinner, there came to the said parlour all other

* It is worth noting that at that time an agricultural labourer's wages (as deduced from statistics in Thorold Rogers's *Six Centuries of Work and Wages*) amounted to about £5 8s. od. (£76) in a year.

poor folk that were either tenants to the said monastery, or dwelling within their fee, called 'St Nicholas' fee,' and they should have meat and drink sufficient. And upon every day called St Nicholas' day there was provision made of bread, and then there was delivered to every poor body one loaf. And likewise upon every Good Friday there was used a general alms, which was one penny in money to every poor body coming."

Hoker's second contribution is a valuable illustration of the feelings of the populace concerning the chief phase of the spoliation of their Church. "This year, 1535, by a parliament holden at London, all religious houses of the sum of ccc marks and under were given to the king to be suppressed; and Sir John Tregonwell, Sir Thomas Arundell, and others, were appointed to be commissioners for the same in the west parties; who came to this city in the somer tyme to execute their commission, and beginning first with the priory of St Nicholas; after that they viewed the same, they went thence to dynner, and commanded one in the time of their absence to pull down the roodloft up the churche. In the mean while, and before they did return, certain women and wives in the city, namely, Jone Reve, Elizabeth Glanfeld, Agnes Collaton, Alys Myller, Joan Rede, and others, mynding to stop the suppressing of that house, came in at last to the saide churche: dore being fast, they broke it open, and finding there the man pulling down the roodloft, they all sought all the means they could to take him, and hurled stones unto him, insomuch that for his safety he was driven to take the tower for his refuge, and yet they pursued him so eagerly that he was enforced to leap out at a window and so save himself, and very hardly he escaped the breaking of his neck; but yet brake one of his ribs. John Blackaller, one of the aldermen of the city, being advertised hereof, he with all spede gate him to the said monastery, so thinking that what with fair words, and what with foul words, to have stayed and pacified the women; but howsoever he talked with them, they were playn with hym, and the aforesaid Elizabeth Glanfeld gave him a blow, and sent him packynge. The mayor (William Hurst) having understanding hereof, and being very lothe the visitors should be advertised of any such

disorders and trobles, he came down with his officers. Before whose comyng, they had made fast the churche dores, and had bestowed themselves in places meet as they thought to stand to their defence. Notwithstanding the mayor broke in upon them, and with much ado he apprehended them, and took them all, and sent them to ward. The visitors being then made acquainted therewith, they gave thanks to the mayor for the care and diligence of their services, and so they proceeded to the suppressing of the house: and before their departure they intreated the mayor for releasing of the women."

Of conventual buildings in the diocese there is not much remaining, except at Forde, where, though the church has disappeared, most of the rest has survived, being converted into a private mansion; and at St Nicholas's, Exeter, whose west wing—mostly Norman—has been restored and furnished as a museum. In a less degree the same is true of Torre and of Buckfast, and at both of them portions of the churches have escaped destruction. At Buckland, too, a good country house has been obtained for the Drake family, chiefly by parting the church into rooms. The delightful and stately residence on the summit of St Michael's Mount incorporates the chapel and other parts of the old priory; but the only conventual church that has been taken into use for the parish is the one at St German's. That was the one instance of a building used for the two purposes, and consequently it was still needed as a place of worship for the parishioners after the Religious had gone, and therefore it was preserved. Of the others, most of the shell of the priory chapel of Frithelstock is still standing, close to the east end of the parish church; one side of the cloisters with rooms adjoining forms the lower part of the seat of the Stucleys at Hartland; and at Tavistock the Abbot's hall has been converted into a Unitarian Chapel, and there are two fine gateways and a very remarkable pentagonal tower with crocketed pinnacles. At Plympton the Refectory with a Norman crypt now forms a dwelling house; of the old buildings at Dunkeswell only part of a gateway is left, but within the precincts a new church—Holy Trinity—was erected in 1842; Canonsleigh

is marked by a ruined gateway and the base of a tower with chambers attached; and there are some massive walls at Polslo. Everywhere else destruction by man and the unchecked progress of decay have removed every trace, or almost every trace, of those many sacred edifices which for so long hallowed our land. Even the great abbey church of Tavistock, measuring more than 361 feet (not far short of Exeter Cathedral), was not spared; nor its circular chapter-house, with its "thirty-six seats wrought out in the walls, all arched overhead with curious hewn and carved stone."* The latter survived until 1736, but the ruins of the former were taken down in 1670, leaving only what may have been an arched tomb in the north wall. One site however has been redeemed from desolation and desecration—in recent times a colony of Benedictines of the Roman obedience have settled at Buckfast, and have rebuilt or restored much of the old Cistercian edifice.

The friaries were of course included with the other Religious Houses in the scope of the Dissolution proceedings, and their disappearance was even more complete than that of the others. In Exeter the two establishments shared a common fate on the same day in 1538, the site of the Franciscan Convent being granted to Humphrey Rolles, while that of the Dominicans was bestowed on John, Lord Russell, who shortly afterwards became Earl of Bedford. The latter used the materials to build himself a mansion, called Bedford House, which served not only as a town-house for the Russell family, but as a lodging for distinguished visitors to the city. There Queen Henrietta Maria kept her Court in the troublous times of the Civil War, and gave birth to her daughter Henrietta (afterwards Duchess of Orleans) in 1644; thither, too, came Charles I to see his infant after his victorious campaign in Cornwall; and there the Judges of a generation before held their sessions. The house was demolished in the eighteenth century, but its name is perpetuated in the range of private residences known as Bedford Circus, and in Bedford Church, erected in 1832, which occupy the site.†

* *Collectanea*, Leland, VI, 260.

† *Hist. of Exeter*, Oliver, 115, 116, 192, 217; *Historic Towns—Exeter*, 198.

In Plymouth the towered church of the Franciscans is quite gone, and of the rest of the buildings there is nothing to be seen but one ogee arch in Woolster Street. Of it and of the Dominican Friary the Commissioners of Henry VIII for the sale of bells reported that none were to be found remaining in either House, having probably been sold with the buildings. A chapel belonging to the latter was in use in the reigns of the later Stuarts, and there are still some trifling architectural remains in or about Southside Street. The Carmelite Convent was granted by the King to the Mayor and Corporation, who utilized the church as a guildhall and stored their archives in the tower. But a few years later (1549) the Cornish insurgents, though unable to capture the castle, occupied the town of Plymouth, and burnt that tower with its valuable contents. The fabric of the church survived until 1836, and portions of the conventual walls are still standing.*

Through the Dissolution of the Monasteries the Church in England received a staggering blow, which was much more injurious and far-reaching in its effects than is generally recognised. This is proved by an analysis of the Ordination lists, whose figures show such a general falling-off, that it seemed as if the Church would not survive, because scarcely any candidates offered themselves for the sacred ministry. Exceedingly instructive is the contrast between the numbers ordained before the Dissolution and those after. During the first fifteen years of Veysey's episcopate (1520-1534) as many as 3,019 Orders were conferred—a yearly average of 201; but during the five years 1539-1543 this average fell to 20. In the former period the annual average of priests was 49 and deacons 48, but in the latter 5 of each. It looks as if the authorities were ashamed to let the outside world know how miserably few were the ordinands; for during six years (1538-1544) all the Ordinations of the diocese were held by Thomas, Bishop of Hippo, in a chapel in his own house at Exeter—with one sole exception, when he ordained six persons in the Lady Chapel of the Cathedral; and there would be no inconvenient crowding even in so small a space,

* *Eccles. Hist. of Old Plymouth*, 32, 45, 90.

for only once did the number there reach seven. The decreasing number of institutions is suggestive of a lack of men to put into vacant benefices—the annual average of 43 in the period 1520-1537 fell to 34 in the period 1538-1550. Nor could the Church recover from the great disaster, for, instead of increasing, the Ordination candidates became fewer and fewer. The returns for the last years before Veysey gave place to Coverdale have not been preserved, but during his full two years the latter ordained only five priests and nine deacons; and, when Veysey was restored for a renewed episcopate of rather over a year, his priests numbered but two and his deacons three.*

The reason for this lamentable failure is manifest, when we examine the Ordination lists further; for it is thereby made plain that all, or nearly all, of the ordinands were either actual monks or friars, or were connected with Religious Houses. This is quite evident, if we analyse a typical instance in 1520 and another in 1530. The priests, deacons, and subdeacons ordained by Bishop Veysey in Exeter Cathedral on March 24th 1520 numbered 47; and of these 1 was a monk, and 38 had titles from Religious Houses, 1 from the Collegiate Church of Ottery, and 2 from Oriel College at Oxford, the remaining 5 being ordained for other dioceses and their titles being not specified. Again, the Bishop of Solubria ordained 28 persons to those three higher Orders in Exeter Cathedral on April 2nd, 1530; and 2 of these were monks, 4 were friars, and 20 took their titles from Religious Houses, 1 from the Collegiate Church of Ottery, and 1 from Exeter Cathedral. The Dissolution of Monasteries would affect at least 67, and perhaps as many as 72, out of the whole number of 75. The first-tonsured and the acolytes are not included in this calculation, because they did not require titles for Ordination, their mere names being entered in the lists, from which no inference can be drawn.†

Poor Bishop Veysey experienced that he had fallen on evil days as regards the possessions of his office, for he found Exeter one of the rich sees of England, and at the end of his

* *Episcopal Registers.*

† *Register,* passim.

tenure it was to be reckoned among the poorest. It was a period when the greatest ecclesiastics were unable to refuse the demands of greedy and rapacious officials and politicians, and even Cranmer and Ridley suffered heavily. At Exeter this episcopate was unique as a time of spoliation, for most of the episcopal manors were alienated, the worst offenders being Somerset and Russell, who obtained Royal Letters, which empowered them to enrich themselves by impoverishing the Church. Clyst and Bishop's Tawton went to John, Lord Russell, Morchard Bishop and Crediton to Sir Thomas Denys, Chudleigh to the Duke of Somerset, Bishop's Teignton, Radway, and West Teignmouth to Sir Andrew Dudley, and the house in London to Dudley, afterwards Duke of Northumberland. When Veysey became Bishop, the see was possessed of twenty-two manors and fourteen well furnished residences; and he lived to see all of the latter taken away, except the Exeter palace, while only three of the manors were left, and those had been leased out. But the Bishop was powerless in the matter; for what could he do but signify his consent, when he received a letter from Henry VIII requesting him to bestow his park at Crediton with its 200 acres on his dear friend Sir Thomas Denys, backed up as it was by another letter from John, Lord Russell? * A number of other residences fell to the Crown as part of the loot of the monasteries, for the heads of the great Religious Foundations had town houses in Exeter, which were confiscated with the other property. Certainly this was so in the case of Buckfast, Newenham, Plympton, Tavistock, and Torre, and maybe there were others also.

Wonderfully varied and rich was the furnishing of churches in the early part of the sixteenth century, and we marvel at the number of gifts and bequests—money, vestments, ornaments, materials, goods—that were lavished on even the remote little church of Morebath in the decade 1531-1540.† Such important places as Crediton and Ottery of course possessed a wealth of apparatus. In 1545 the latter possessed 99 copes, and 25 full sets of vestments,

* *The Real Vesey*, 10; Hoker's *Bishops*, 138.

† *Western Antiquary*, XI, 114, 129.

with 3 chasubles besides; and the former had 33 copes and 27 chasubles, besides other vestments. But the time of spoliation had already begun, for Crediton had then for its six altars only 5 chalices (1 of gold), whereas twenty years before it had 6 more silver ones. Ottery had probably lost some too, but there were left to it 3 golden ones and 2 of parcel gilt. Both places bestowed much attention on music, each having an organ both in its choir and in its Lady Chapel, and Ottery had also another on the roodloft —apparently an old one, not required since the new one was placed in the choir; and the same church owned 5 bells, while Crediton had 4, as well as 4 sacring bells.*

An inventory of a number of Cornish churches leads us to infer that the usual provision in 1549 for an ordinary country church was one or two copes, two or three vestments, a cross and a pair of candlesticks, two chalices and cruets, a censer, a banner or two, various hangings, a sacring bell, and three bells in the tower. Some churches had as many as four bells, but there was only one so poorly equipped as to have a single bell. The chalices were all of silver: none were of gold, and only at St Budock was baser metal (latten) used. Other vessels were commonly of latten or brass or tin. Blue was the most usual colour of copes and other vestments, but in this matter custom varied greatly; *e.g.*, Landewednack had a cope and a chasuble of blue velvet and a chasuble of black damask; St Mullion's three chasubles were of blue velvet, red silk, and green; and a wealthy unnamed church (thought to be Glasney) possessed one green and three crimson copes, three full sets of crimson vestments, and one red, one purple, one black, and four green chasubles, while of its eight stoles two were golden, as well as three of its seven maniples. St Just-in-Roseland was exceptionally rich in owning silver goods of the weight of 199 ounces; and likewise Liskeard, whose sum was 165 ounces—including ten chalices. Organs seem to have been very rare acquisitions.†

The Priory of St Michael's Mount was but small, but

* *Trans. of Devon. Assoc.*, XXXIV, 559, 562.

† *Roy. Instit. of Cornwall Trans.*, VII, 92—135.

it could boast of a generous store of all that was needed for the performance of the Church's services. Here is the list. The vestments comprised 13 full sets, and there were 6 copes and 12 albs. The altars (which were four in number) were furnished with 12 frontals and 1 of white cloth for Lent, 17 altar-cloths, 6 towels, 3 crosses, and one pair of candlesticks and another pair branched, 7 corporas cases, a pyx, and a canopy. Sacred vessels included 7 chalices, 6 cruets, 2 censers, a pax, and 3 monstrances. Other ornaments were a processional cross and 2 banners, a reliquary, 2 pewter basins, an image of St Michael, 2 organs, and the sword and spurs of King Henry. The books consisted of 5 missals (2 being printed), a breviary, a manual, a primer, 2 portfories, 3 psalters, an antiphonary, 4 legenda, 2 hymnals, 6 processionals, and a Bible. This inventory, dating from early in the sixteenth century, seems a very full one ; but even that was not all, for a later hand has added :—5 sets of vestments, 1 cope, 1 frontal, a Lenten veil, 3 corporas cases, 4 silk towels, 2 herse palls, and many hangings.

By the autumn of 1538 the friaries of Truro and Bodmin had already been partly despoiled, especially the former, although it was not till September in that year that the eleven Truro Dominicans and the ten Bodmin Franciscans put their signatures to the forced and untruthful declaration that " with one assent and consent without any maner of coaccyon or consell we do gyve our howse into y^e^ handdes of y^e^ lorde vysyter to y^e^ kynges use." At Truro there was little left but three altars, an organ, books, three sacring bells, and three bells in the tower, together with 360 ounces of broken silver and plate ; but at Bodmin, besides four alabaster altars, an organ case, divers candlesticks and some other ornaments, and 286 ounces of broken silver and plate, there still remained seven sets of vestments, eight chasubles, eight copes, a surplice, a rochet, and other articles.*

Such inventories, revealing to us how bounteous were the treasures of collegiate churches and parish churches and religious houses in the diocese—and many others might be cited—afford some idea of the pious generosity of our fore-

* *Roy. Instit. of Cornwall Trans.*, VIII, 23, 24.

fathers, of the enormous extent of the robbery inflicted upon the Church, and of the vast amount of wealth that must have poured into the royal coffers. But sad indeed is the contrast, when we examine the lists of Church goods of later ages. Here are the possessions of a city church, St Petrock's at Exeter :—3 gilt chalices with covers, 3 pewter flagons, a pewter bason for baptisms, a linen table-cloth, 3 cushions, a pall, a Bible, Erasmus's *Paraphrase*, and Bishop Jewell's Works.* And St Mary's at Penzance had only these :— a chalice and two salvers and a flagon of silver, two tin flagons, a carpet and linen cloth for the altar, pulpit cloth and cushion, linen cloths for the desk and the font and the Eucharist, a Bible, two Prayer Books, and a bell.† Inventories of country churches would be similar to these, or probably they were even more meagre, as their silver would generally consist only of one chalice with cover.‡

Details showing how the Spoliation affected a small city church are to be found in the accounts of the churchwardens of St Petrock's at Exeter. The first entry bearing on the subject is in 1547-8, when the sum of 1s. 4d. (18s.) was paid for " takyng downe of the roode and for makyng clene of the churche " ; and this was followed next year by the erasing of the painted figures on screen or walls, the spaces being white-limed. In 1549-50 the high altar and the side altar were removed and sold, as well as divers images and other ornaments ; and more goods were disposed of in the year after, among them two candlesticks, a thurible and boat, all of silver. More plate went in the two following years, as well as two altar-cloths, a small bell weighing 30 lbs., and a valuable chasuble, which fetched as much as £8 10s. 0d. (£114). Under Queen Mary many articles were replaced— there is mention of new rood and roodloft, tabernacle, crucifix, pyx, candlesticks, alb, Lent hanging, and other things, all of which, however, were soon swept away again in the next reign.§

* *Trans. of Devon. Assoc.*, XIV, 480.
† *Penzance Antiq. Soc. Trans.*, III, 141.
‡ *Eng. Liturgical Colours.*
§ *Trans. of Devon. Assoc.*, XIV, 453-460.

The inventories of Church goods of the city of Exeter, compiled in the year 1552, have much to tell as to the usual provision of ornaments at that time, and also as to the amount of spoliation that had already been perpetrated. Those inventories were drawn up by the Cathedral Chapter and the Churchwardens of the nineteen parishes of the city in obedience to the command of the King and his Council; for the latter, finding themselves saddled with a debt of £200,000 (£2,640,000 in modern computation), and not knowing any other method of raising the money, resolved to obtain as much as possible by confiscating the possessions of the churches throughout the kingdom. A letter, therefore, was sent in August 1552 to the Bishop of Exeter and his fellow-commissioners, ordering them to obtain lists of "the plate, jewels, bells, and all things belonging to the parish churches," the other commissioners for the city being the Mayor (William Hurst) and two aldermen (Thomas Prestwood and John Midwinter).

The returns show that the Cathedral ornaments included, besides other articles, 6 chalices and patens, 2 cruets, 2 censers, 8 candlesticks, 2 crosses, 20 chasubles, 168 copes, and 3 banners. When compared with the present day, this provision may seem generous; but that very many articles had somehow been alienated is evident from an examination of the very lengthy inventory of 1506, which contains mention of 30 chalices, 29 patens, 38 cruets, 7 censers, 16 candlesticks, 14 crosses, 133 chasubles, 291 copes, and 18 banners. Again, the unimportant little church of All Hallows in Goldsmith Street had possessed in 1537 as many as 3 chalices, a silver-gilt cross with three figures, a censer with incense-boat and spoon, and a pax of ivory and silver; but in 1552 all of these had disappeared, except one chalice, and that the smallest of the three. From a confession written by Canon John Pollard in 1556, two years after he had been deprived of the archdeaconry of Barnstaple, we know that a quantity of the *ornamenta* of the Cathedral—silver, chasubles, and copes—had gone to the members of the Chapter, being shared among them. John Pollard had to sign a promise to restore his portion of the Church's goods.*

* Oliver's *Bishops*, 320; *Edwardian Inventories*, 4, 10; *Ordinale Exon.*, I, xii.

There were three parishes whose churchwardens declared that, as far as they knew, nothing had been taken away from their churches. These were Holy Trinity, St Mary Steps, and St Paul's; and as a sample of the possessions of a town church at that time we give the inventory of the last named :—2 silver-gilt chalices, 2 pairs of latten candlesticks, a latten cross fixed on a staff and a foot or stand for the same when used as an altar-cross, a censer of brass, a latten holy water vessel, a brass lamp, a latten hanging canopy for the Reserved Sacrament, a sanctus bell, 4 chasubles (white silk, red silk, blue velvet, russet silk), 4 albs, 2 copes (green silk, blue velvet), 2 surplices, 1 rochet, 3 burses, 4 corporals, 2 towels, 6 altar cloths (3 plain, 3 of diaper), 2 silk cushions (book-rests), 2 hangings for the sepulchre, a satin cloth, an old silk banner, a funeral pall of blue silk, an organ, and 3 bells.*

The disappearance of ornaments from other city churches is to be accounted for in several ways, the chief one being a contribution from each for the carrying out of a great public work, *viz.*, the widening of the river Exe and making it more available as a harbour for shipping traffic as far as the city. This scheme had been promoted by an Act of Parliament of 1530, and for the purpose eight of the Exeter parishes parted with some of their holy vessels—chalices, patens, crosses, censers, pyxes, chrismatories—the contributing parishes being St George's, St Kerrian's, St Mary Arches, St Mary Major's, St Olave's, St Pancras's, St Petrock's, and St Stephen's. The amount of silver—over 7 cwt.—was sold by the Mayor and Corporation in 1551 to John Bodley at the rate of 5s. 2d. (£3 8s. 2d.) an ounce, and produced the sum of £229 11s. 9d. (£3,031). But the scheme was not worked successfully, and it was not till the reign of Elizabeth that by the making of a canal a water-way was opened up to the city.†

Besides the spoliation of the holy vessels, the Church suffered by the silencing of its peals of bells. Inasmuch as the Church bells had been used to call together the insur-

* *Edwardian Inventories*, 58, 69, 85.

† *Hist. of Exeter*, Oliver, 249; *Edwardian Inventories*, xiii.

gents of 1549, an order was issued from the Council that the two counties, with the exception of the loyal city of Exeter, were to be punished by the removal of all bells but one for each place, the treble only being left to give notice of services. Afterwards, however, this order was modified, and, instead of being removed, the bells were left in the church, but deprived of their clappers and fittings. The grant of all this iron—a valuable asset—was made to Sir Arthur Champernowne and Mr John Chichester, who in most cases sold the goods to the churchwardens or parishioners of the church concerned; and no doubt, as soon as the tyranny of the Council was ended by the death of Edward VI, the bells were refitted and rehung, and taken into use again.*

Another reason for alienating Church goods was the repair or furnishing of the building, the wardens finding that the easiest method of paying bills was to raise money by selling the Church's treasures. Thus All Hallows' in Goldsmith Street parted with a chalice in order to repair the tower, and with a censer to provide additional seats. At St David's a corporal fetched 8s. (£5 5s. 7d.) for church repairs, and a pyx 15s. (£9 18s. 0d.) to make two buttresses; and £5 10s. 0d. (£73) accrued from the sale of a chalice, a chasuble, a burse and corporal, and a pair of candlesticks, which sum paid for the purchase of a Bible, a *Paraphrase* of Erasmus, and a Communion Book, to replace copies that had been stolen. The parishioners of St Kerrian's, too, sold a silver-gilt pyx to repair their church at the time of the siege, St Mary Arches having sold a candlestick for a like purpose some years before. A new font was wanted at St Olave's and a pulpit and an iron desk, so the silver cruets were disposed of; and a cross of silver, weighing 48 ounces, provided means for "garnishing the church and setting it forth with texts of Holy Scripture."†

Besides these causes the troublous time of the siege was responsible for a good deal of spoliation. Not only were parishes required to deliver up some of their valuables for the payment of soldiers and the relief of the poor, but the Church suffered through deeds of dishonesty, A chalice,

* *Western Rebellion*, 372.

† *Edwardian Inventories*, 11, 18, 19, 35, 45, 62.

a pyx, and a pax were stolen from St Pancras's; and when the royalist troops entered the city after the raising of the siege, a Welshman took advantage of the confusion to rob the clerk of St Stephen's of a silver chalice. St Sidwell's, being outside the walls, was despoiled of almost everything that was removable, so that there were left only a pyx, which had to serve as a chalice, a paten, and two cruets. Of the four bells, only one was left; and all the vestments were stolen, so that the parish was dependent on the charity of the Cathedral for the gift of an old chasuble. But earlier thefts had been perpetrated, too, for "before the comocion tyme" St David's had been robbed of four altar-cloths and two sets of vestments, and St Lawrence's had lost some of its treasures*.

These divers spoliations, however, were comparatively of but little importance, for in 1553 the King issued his orders—each cathedral, church, or chapel was to be allowed to retain one chalice, or two, according to its size, and sufficient furniture and covering for the altar, and a surplice for each minister, but all else was to be confiscated. The rest of the linen goods were to be distributed to the poor; the copes, vestments, altar-hangings, and other ornaments were to be sold for the King's profit; and the like was to be done with all articles composed of metal, except the big bells and the sanctus bells, which were to be preserved until further instructions should be sent concerning their disposal. Thus was brought about that almost utter denuding of our parish churches, wherein henceforth in poverty and almost nakedness the services of the Church of England were to be performed.†

All this destruction must have caused poignant grief to the canons of the Cathedral, who loved the ancient ceremonies and the rich accompaniments of public worship. But the Dean, who was probably the most *difficile* Head who ever presided over the Exeter Chapter, was of different mind, and cordially approved of the King's policy. He had succeeded Reginald Pole, who in 1537 had been obliged to resign; and he had been elected by the canons, for they

* *Edwardian Inventories*, 17, 38, 67, 75, 76, 83.

† *Bk. of Com. Prayer*, Stevens, I, 357.

found themselves unable to stand out against the royal recommendation of "our trusty and well-beloved Chaplain, Master Simon Haynes, who is our Ambassador and Agent in the parts beyond the sea for certain our affairs and necessary business there." As soon as he became Dean, he began to quarrel with his Chapter, and the two parties seem to have been at loggerheads during the whole of his fifteen years of office, save only that during the siege of the city they were agreed in their loyalty to the Crown. He refused to pay the usual caution-money on entering office, he claimed jurisdiction over his colleagues, and he would not recognise old customs, or provide wax for candles to burn before the high altar, as former deans had done. Then in 1550 the canons preferred grievous complaints against him, charging him with having destroyed many beautiful statues of saints, though they had not been made the objects of superstitious pilgrimages; with having mutilated the books in the choir, doing damage to the extent of twenty marks (£176); with having torn up £40 (£528) worth of monumental iron and brass—Bishop Lacy's tomb was one that suffered—to the great injury of walls and pillars and pavements; with having preached against holy bread and holy water; and with having extinguished the light that for three hundred years had burnt before the high altar. The Council summoned him to appear before them in London to answer for his evil opinions, and as a result he was kept in the Fleet Prison for three months and a half; but on his release he returned to Exeter to quarrel again with his canons.

Haynes was a thorough-going reformer even in his earlier years, when he was President of Queens' and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge; and as Dean he had submitted to Henry VIII his very radical "Proposal for the Government of the Church of Exeter." His carefully thought-out scheme bore no fruit, and we cannot help rejoicing at his failure to effect his desire that St Peter's Cathedral should henceforth be known as Christchurch, and that in place of Dean, Canons, Prebendaries, Precentor, and other dignitaries there should be a Pastor (appointed by the King) and twelve Preachers of the Gospel (appointed by the Bishop). But in

other respects he showed originality combined with wisdom—each of the twelve was annually to preach eight sermons in churches in the diocese; a Free Grammar School for sixty boys was to be attached to the Cathedral, with twelve exhibitions tenable at Oxford and the like number at Cambridge; and there was to be started a Free Song School with forty boys, who were to sing the daily services in the Cathedral, and be taught reading, writing, singing, and instrumental music, as well as "ther a.b.c. in greke and hebrew." He was one of the revisers who were responsible for the First Prayer Book of Edward VI, and of a piece with their speaking of the Holy Communion as "commonly called the Mass," was his including in his Proposal the provision of "three honest prests daili to say morow (*i.e.*, morning) mass in the said cathedral churche," and "to sing daily high mass."*

What a contrast is presented by a comparison of the possessions of the Church of England at the beginning of this period with those at its close! What a sorry tale of spoliation, destruction, iconoclasm during the thirty years that separated the middle of the reign of Henry VIII from the first year of that of Elizabeth! In 1528 ecclesiastical endowments were rich and secure; but by 1558 nearly everything had been taken away, save the fabrics of the cathedrals and churches. Monasteries and chantries and hospitals had vanished, the establishments of collegiate churches had been broken up, the ornaments of the churches and of the ministers thereof had been reduced to a poor and paltry *minimum*, and episcopal estates and incomes and the stipends of the parochial clergy had generally suffered such diminution that the Church was seriously crippled for generations. Almost all of this was directly the result either of the Dissolution of the Monasteries by Henry VIII, or of the impoverishing of parish churches by order of the Council of Edward VI; and if it is argued that in some cases Church goods were alienated without royal command or authority, we reply that such actions were made possible only by the encouragement provided in the example of the rulers, so that

* Oliver's *Bishops*, 477; *Western Rebellion*, 173; Reynolds, 169.

they were indirectly responsible for these also. The rapacity of Henry VIII had made the Church of England poor instead of rich, and the puritanical Government of his young son had so stripped the sacred buildings of their beauty of holiness, that they resembled the simple and bare Zwinglian churches of Switzerland rather than the more ornate edifices of Lutheran Germany. In succeeding generations religion in England had to endeavour to exercise her benign influence without much assistance from those aesthetic charms which are often powerful in appealing to the spiritual faculties through the external senses; and as the scope for love of sacred things narrowed, the aspiration of worship proportionately suffered discouragement.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE TUDOR QUEENS.

AFTER Queen Mary's accession Bishop Veysey soon returned to Exeter, but spent only a couple of months in his diocese, leaving the performance of his episcopal duties to William Collumpton, titular Bishop of Hippo, and last Prior of St Nicholas's, Exeter. He himself went back to his home at Sutton Coldfield, where he died in October 1554. His epitaph over his tomb in the church at that place gives his age as 103, but the inscription belongs to a much later date, and from the known facts of his life it has been calculated that he was 89. The effigy of his slim figure represents him as having a receding forehead and chin, and large features—a big nose, thick lips, and a beetling brow, all of which bespeak rather a man of the world than a saint or a scholar.*

We gain some insight into the working of the Church's system, as it was revived in the days of Veysey's restoration, from the contemporary account of the services provided for St Michael's Chapel at Hatherland, an outlying settlement in the parish of Washfield near Tiverton. The Rector binds himself and his successors to provide holy water and say Mass and give the blessed bread to the people on every Sunday in the year ; on Christmas Day there is to be Mattins, Mass, and procession, and the same together with Communion on Easter Day ; on Candlemas Day candles are to be blessed and Mass said, and on Palm Sunday there is to be the blessing of palms, and on Tuesday in Rogation-week procession and Mass ; and Mass is to be said also on St Michael's Day, and St Leonard's Day, and whenever a woman is churched. The emoluments for all this are declared to be " better than tenne powndes (£128) by the yere."†

* *The Real Vesey*, 19.

† *Episcopal Register*, vol. XVII.

A considerable interval was allowed to elapse after the death of Veysey before Exeter was provided with a successor; and when James Turberville—of good birth in Dorset, Prebendary of Winchester, and former Fellow of New College at Oxford—was consecrated in St Paul's Cathedral in September 1555, the see had been vacant more than ten months, nor was it till about six months later that he arrived in his diocese. He was not however neglectful of his duties, and—provided with a licence of Bonner to exercise his episcopal office within the diocese of London so long as he should see fit to remain—he collated or instituted various incumbents there, while his Vicar General, Subdean John Blaxton, admitted others at Exeter. He was at once invested by the King and Queen with powers for the repressing of heresies and of false rumours, and Archbishop Pole issued to him a commission in his stead and as his deputy to hold a Visitation of the Exeter diocese, the exempt as well as others being included in its scope. Some months later there followed a rescript from the Primate indicating divers irregularities and laxities in the Church's ordinances and functions, which were to be abated; and soon after came a Royal Letter exempting from the paying of tenths those of the clergy whose stipends were under twenty marks (£168), while to the see was restored the confiscated manor of Crediton—one of the very oldest of its possessions. Turberville was resident in his diocese during most of his time, and the work seems to have gone on quietly and satisfactorily; but, though there was fair activity in instituting to benefices—as many as 68 incumbents were admitted in 1557, and his yearly average was 35—the number of ordinands was lamentably small, for only 8 deacons and 8 priests were ordained in the two years whose returns have been preserved (1557 and 1558), and it is quite uncertain whether there were any in the other years.*

The salient feature in the Church's history at that time was the cruel persecution of those who refused to accept the doctrines of the State religion, the statute of Henry VIII

* *Register*, ff. 1-22, 54; *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, LVII, 325.

that required a regular court and witnesses for the condemnation of heretics being repealed. Consequently the old law of "De heretico comburendo," first enacted against the Lollards, was brought back into vogue, and the accused were left without any safeguards or protection. Very few of the 286 persons, who were committed to the fire in those terrible four years, suffered in the south-west of England—there were only three in the Winchester diocese, five in Gloucester, three in Salisbury, none in Bath and Wells, and but one in Exeter. The Exeter victim was one of the forty-six women burnt in England, Agnes Prest of Cornwall, who was condemned at the assize at Launceston, and suffered the extreme penalty in the Southernhay outside the walls of Exeter.*

An extensive replacing of church furniture and ornaments was effected during Mary's reign, and no doubt what was done at Ashburton was typical of restorations that took place in many another place. There a roodloft and parclose screens had been erected 1521-5 at a cost of £10 11s. 4d. (£144); and these had been painted some years later at great expense, £16 13s. 4d. (£224) being paid by the churchwardens for the adorning of the south part of the roodloft and the parclose screens; but in 1547 the rood had been removed by order of the Royal Commissioners, though, apparently, the roodloft was allowed to remain till sixteen years later. In 1555, however, a new rood was made at Exeter for £2 (£26), the carriage to Ashburton costing four pence (4s. 4d.), and the fixing two pence (2s. 2d.).†

On the accession of Queen Elizabeth Turberville was not at once deprived. He was summoned to her first Parliament of January 1559, and took his part in opposing the Bill for restoring the tenths and first-fruits to the Crown and other anti-papal measures; but the action that brought about his deprivation was his refusal to take the Oath of Supremacy. This, of course, necessitated his removal, which was effected in June of that year. He seems to have spent the remainder of his life in retirement in London, and to have died in 1570.

* G. G. Perry, II, 233, 251; *Book of Martyrs*, III, 1019.

† *Parish of Ashburton*, 18, 24, 26; *Devon Notes and Queries*, IV, 226, 227; *Trans. of Devon. Assoc.*, XXXV, 434.

If the four Elizabethan bishops of Exeter were neither leading men in the Church of England, nor to be accounted among the great prelates of the diocese, it is at least pleasant to know that they were examples to their flock both in their devotion to religion and in the uprightness of their lives. William Alley (1560-1570) appears, indeed, to have been a stationary rather than a peripatetic diocesan; but John Hoker has given so delightful a portraiture of him, that we cannot but feel that he must have been a very Christian bishop and a very lovable man. Himself courteous and gentle, "loth to offend, ready to forgive, void of malice, full of love, bountifull in hospitality," his table-talk was "full of honest speeches, joined with learning and pleasantness." And he was no mean scholar, for "he was very well learned universally, but his chief study and profession was in divinity, and in the tongues," his linguistic attainments including Hebrew, so that he was employed to revise the Book of Deuteronomy for the Bishops' Bible. "He was well stored, and his library well replenished, with all the best sort of writers, which most gladly he would impart and make open to every good scholar and student, whose company and conference he did most desire and imbrace." He made it his rule to preach on every Holy Day, and "upon the week days he would and did read a lecture of divinity," the rest of his time being devoted to study and writing; though leaving time for a game of bowls, when he was "very merry and pleasant, void of all sadness, which might abate the benefit of recreation." Hoker's references to his literary tastes are in part supported by his will, in which he makes special bequests of his "divinitie books," "his bookes of philosophie and phisicke," and his "bookes of humanitie."*

However, even so sweet a manner of life was liable to fail, and our bishop in his early days fell out with the City authorities. But we can hardly imagine that they would harbour rancorous feelings against him, after receiving from him a courteous letter of thanks for kindness done to him and his Chancellor, in which he expressed his trust that "all

* *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, I, 326; Hoker's *Bishops*, 143; Wills, P.C.C., Lyon, 10.

olde matters which heretofore hathe bredde coler and stomache betweene us shall be clerelye suppressed and forgotten."*

Bishop Alley's churchmanship was of a very indefinite type, and the public conception of the rite of Ordination must have been sadly lowered by his treatment of it. There was a lack of dignity and reverence in the conferring of Holy Orders in the hall of his palace and in his house at Honiton, which were generally utilized for the purpose; and the Ember seasons ceased to be signalized as the proper times, for he would ordain on any day that seemed convenient, and so freely that eighteen Ordinations occurred in a period of twelve months. Nor did he reck of the canon that forbade him to make a man both deacon and priest in one day; and he set ecclesiastical regulations at defiance by collating and instituting Lewis Swete, a youth in his eighteenth year, to the vicarage of Kea and Kenwyn. In her Letter of Recommendation to the Exeter Chapter Queen Elizabeth had set forth Alley's fitness for "virtue, learning, and wisdom," but no mention was made of loyalty to the Church and her traditions. Still, to his credit it must be recorded that he was constant in his duty of residing in his diocese—mostly at Exeter, but a good deal at Honiton; and also that under him the Church began to recover from the paucity of Ordination candidates.

With wonderment and envy we read of the large congregations that attended daily Morning Prayer in the Cathedral during that period, and we gain some insight into this phase of religious observance from communications that passed between the Queen's Commissioners and the Exeter Chapter shortly before the arrival of Bishop Alley. It seems that at a Visitation held by the Queen's Visitors the Chapter had agreed to have that service in the choir at an hour convenient to the people; and not only was it largely attended, but the worshippers "for their greater comfort and better stirring up of their hearts to devotion" had arranged among themselves to sing a psalm, "according to the use and manner of the primitive Church." This had been approved by the Visitors and formally endorsed by the Chapter; but complaint

* *Notes and Gleanings*, II, 84.

was made that some of the vicars choral had scoffed at the practice and had molested and troubled the people, and therein had been abetted by the canons. Therefore a stiff letter was dispatched by Authority to the Chapter, reminding them of their pledged word, and calling upon them to fulfil their promise.*

Next came William Bradbridge (1571-1578), who, being in his seventieth year, was too old to take charge of so extensive and troublesome a diocese, and whose administration is concisely estimated by Izacke as that of "a man only memorable for this, that nothing memorable is recorded of him saving that he well governed this church about eight years." He was much of a recluse, being found very little in Exeter, but spending most of the earlier half of his episcopate at Lezant, his benefice near Launceston; and later—to the very great inconvenience of his clergy—he resided chiefly at his other *commendam*, Newton Ferrers, where he took to farming, of which he made a miserable failure. He was much discouraged by difficulties that he encountered from men who held strange views or refused to obey the Church's rules, so that he petitioned to be allowed to resign his bishopric and retire to the deanery of Salisbury, which he was holding when he was promoted to Exeter; but this was not granted. He died in debt to the amount of £1,400 (£14,581) for tenths and subsidies due to the Queen, and she immediately seized all his possessions, leaving not even enough to pay his funeral expenses.†

His successor was John Woolton (1579-1594), a nephew of the great Dean Nowell of St Paul's. He had shown what manner of man he was, in that while Canon of Exeter he had regularly preached twice a Sunday, and every week-day had read two divinity lectures; and during the plague of 1570 he had been one of the only two clergymen who had remained in the city to tend the sick. He was also known as the author of a number of books, mostly of a devotional character. His rule as bishop is chiefly remarkable for the

* *Concilia*, Wilkins, iv, 200.

† *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, VI, 147; *Memorials of Exeter*, Izacke, 136; *Excester*, Hoker, 144.

strictness with which he endeavoured to enforce conformity, one of the sufferers being his own son, whom he had ordained and beneficed, but who had become a Roman Catholic. The Bishop not only deprived him of his living, but, as he confessed to the Primate, "for his lewdnesse layd him in a common jayle with irons upon him; a kind of punishment which parents themselves do not commonly inflict upon their own children."

He lived in a time when the Queen and her Privy Council displayed far-reaching activity in the matter of Church affairs, and he was constantly receiving mandates and letters of enquiry concerning current topics and ecclesiastical abuses. Almost as soon as he became a bishop, he was informed that a pernicious book had been published in London entitled *The Gaping Gulf*, which libellously reflected on the royal policy and intentions, especially in regard to religion. Her Majesty was about to issue a proclamation, and on receipt thereof the Bishop was to call an assembly of his principal clergy and read it to them, and was to notify that the Queen was determined to maintain the present settlement of religion without any alteration. He was also to charge other ministers to the like effect (which he did through his archdeacons), warning them to beware of meddling with State matters in their sermons, lest they should disturb the minds of her Majesty's subjects. This was closely followed by an order concerning the work of the ministry—many clergymen in their zeal for the preaching of the Word had neglected the ministering of the Sacrament, and therefore his Lordship is called upon to use his best endeavours to check the evil. In consequence of further instructions from the Council (1582) the Bishop directed each of his archdeacons to summon all his parsons, vicars, curates, churchwardens, and sidesmen (including those of the Bishop's and the Chapter's peculiars, and not even omitting the peculiars of St Buryan and Uffculme), and through them to obtain the names of all persons who were defaulters in attendance at church, or who refused to conform in religious observances. These were to be delated for conviction to the justices, and from them certificates with their names were to be obtained and forwarded

to the Bishop. This order was to apply also to recusants, information being sought as to how long their recusancy had lasted; and concerning them more searching enquiries were instituted a few years later, accompanied by a command that they should attend the Church's services.*

Other rescripts from the Council were concerned with the encouraging of a harbour at Seaton, under the name of "the haven of Colyton" (1580); a levy demanded from the Bishop and clergy for the expenses of the war in the Low Countries (1586), the results being a sum of £542 (£5,420) paid to the Exchequer, but great discontent at the exaction; and a clerical subsidy of £84 (£840), sent to the Archbishop at the time of the Armada, for "the setting out of demi-lances and light horse for the defence of the Realm against the Invasion of the Spaniard," which money was ultimately refunded to those who had paid it. Besides these, there was a Royal Brief requiring a diocesan collection for the building of a church at Denbigh (1580), and a letter from the High Commissioners for the re-edifying and repairing of St Paul's Cathedral ("the Churche Chauntree and steple of Poules within the cittie of London"), in consequence of "the burninge of the said Churche and steple." Towards this the diocese of Exeter had collected the generous sum of £3,614 (£36,140), and the Bishop is prayed to find out and report who had the money, how much had been paid over, and how much remained (1584). A more distant cause that appealed somewhat forcibly to Englishmen was that of the city of Geneva, just then hard pressed by the Duke of Savoy, and needing relief in her struggle for independence. Over 400 clergymen of the Exeter diocese contributed, the Bishop subscribing £10 (£100), the Dean and Chapter £5 (£50), besides gifts from individual members; and the whole sum, including £59 (£590) from the citizens of Exeter, amounted to £203 (£2,030), which was sent to the Archbishop of Canterbury. "Davye Blarke and his schollars out of the schoole of Kilkhampton" gave 30s. 9d. (£15 7s. 6d.), and it is interesting to light upon one anonymous contributor in the

* *Register*, passim (unpaginated).

Exeter list—"A gentleman 20s." (£10). Another item of foreign affairs that undoubtedly aroused interest in the diocese was the rather brilliant but quite futile and very costly attempt to conquer Portugal (1589); though its bearing upon Church history was, we think, sadly misrepresented by Archbishop Whitgift, who wrote to ask for public prayers to be offered "at the least thrice in every week" for "the great and worthy enterprise of Sir John Norris and Sir Francis Drake now in action, the good success of which must needs tend to the glory of God and to the singular benefit of His Church."

We have not much to chronicle concerning Church doings in Bishop Woolton's time. He held a Visitation of his diocese in 1582, and an Archiepiscopal Visitation followed a year or two later, but greater prominence is assigned in the *Register* to a scheme for the union of benefices in the city of Exeter. The project emanated fron the Mayor and Corporation, who petitioned the Queen that power to take action might be conferred on them by Parliament. They pointed out that there then existed seventeen parish churches and two chapels-of-ease, and that the stipends were so small that most of them had for long been void of any incumbent, so that two or even three were served by one curate; with the result that the services were hurried through, the people were not taught, and the Church was poorly and unworthily represented. They desired therefore that the parishes should be reduced in number to five or six—St Mary Major's, St Mary Arches, St Martin's, Holy Trinity, St Edmund's, and perhaps one other—and that their churches should be enlarged and should serve for the whole city and its suburbs, the civic authorities being given power to use Church property for that purpose (1581). The Bishop does not appear to have approved of the scheme, but he did not oppose the main proposal, though he raised certain objections, chiefly by way of safeguarding the Church's rights. Anyhow, the attempt failed, and we hear no more of it.

One other episcopate falls within this period—that of Gervase Babington, who presided here for only two years

(1595-1597) before he was moved on to the more lucrative Worcester. His reputation as a preacher and the patronage of men of influence had procured him the see of Llandaff, though indeed the revenue was so small (it was reputed to be only £154, *i.e.*, £1,452) that he jestingly spoke of himself as the Bishop of "Aff," because the "land" had been taken away. He, too, was well esteemed as a theological writer, his works being practical or expository; but he did an ill turn to the see by consenting to alienate to the grasping Queen the valuable manor of Crediton, which had been recovered after its cession by Bishop Veysey. The records in his Register are very scanty, the chief one being a letter from the Privy Council, commending him and the Canons for their desire to have their servants and dependents trained in arms for the defence of the Realm—it was the time when Philip of Spain was planning a fresh invasion of England. The Council recommended an application to the Lord Lieutenant of the county for a trusty officer to train the men, that they might be ready to take their place with others in order to repel any possible attack.

The chief policy in the government of the diocese during Elizabeth's reign was the endeavour to obtain conformity with the Church's discipline and doctrine. Alley had been specially solicitous about this, and had carried his efforts to the absurd extreme of pressing exact uniformity upon every one, even in the most trifling matters; for not only must the pulpits be so tuned that all teachings and interpretations must be precisely in accord, but it could not be tolerated that one clergyman should wear a button on his cap and another have none. When Bradbridge failed to induce certain Cornish gentlemen to attend the services of the Church, or to convince a lay reader and schoolmaster of Liskeard that he was wrong in declaring that an oath taken on the Gospels was of no more value than if it had been taken on a rush or a fly, he took action by delating the former to the Ecclesiastical Commission at Lambeth, and committing the latter to be tried at the assize. As for Woolton, he first employed gentle means to persuade the many lawless ones to conform, and then, as he did not succeed, he adopted

severe measures. "Sythe the lambe's skynne wil doe no good, I will make tryall howe the lyon's will prevaile"—such was his quaint announcement to his patron, Lord Burghley. Among others who felt the weight of his hand were the Family of Love, a numerous sect, who considered themselves exempt from the laws of common morality. With them he had some little success, and twenty of their members were prevailed upon to recant publicly in Exeter Cathedral. The combined efforts of these successive Bishops, however, do not appear to have been very efficacious in stemming the onward flow of Puritanism; and, when the Tudor gave place to the Stuart rule, the religious tone of the Exeter diocese was an utter contrast to that of the time of the Devonshire Rising half a century before.

Church work at that time was much hampered by poverty. This was due partly to the depreciation in the value of money and the consequent higher cost of living—a result of the Dissolution of the Monasteries and other changes of the middle of the sixteenth century; and as the stipends of the clergy were not increased *pro rata*, the Church necessarily suffered. But the alienation of ecclesiastical property was partly responsible; and this scandalous abuse, wrought by the Crown or under royal sanction, affected especially those in highest position. Alley knew what it was to be poor, for during Mary's reign, being a married man, he had to hide his priesthood, and struggle for a precarious livelihood by acting as a doctor or by teaching children. But even he, on being appointed to Exeter, had to complain of "the tenuitie of that living"; and out of pity he was allowed to hold *in commendam* the rectory of Honiton, his successor being likewise granted Newton Ferrers and Lezant, besides retaining the Chancellorship of Chichester. Woolton, on becoming Bishop, though he was at the time a Canon of Exeter and had several other benefices, had not the means to purchase the most necessary furniture for his palace, and was reduced to the straits of having to borrow £5 (£52) apiece from fifteen of his clergy; so he was permitted to augment his income by drawing the stipends of archpriest of Haccombe and rector of Lezant. It may be noted that Queen Elizabeth, after

her wont, pocketed five years' revenue of the see of Exeter, by delaying the appointment of a new bishop for twelve months at each of the five vacancies that occurred during her reign. The finances of the Dean and Chapter, too, were in low water ; and as a remedy Bishop Alley, with their consent and acting with royal authority, in 1561 permanently reduced the number of the canons from twenty-four to nine—a drastic alteration, which must have sadly detracted from the dignity of the Cathedral services, though affording material relief to the surviving members.*

We have already noted the enormous reduction in the number of Ordination candidates, consequent on the Dissolution of the Monasteries ; and there was no recovery from this under Coverdale, or the restored Veysey, or Turberville, for in their eight years they admitted only 20 deacons and 16 priests. In Alley's time, however, there was a decided improvement, for his yearly average was 29 deacons and 25 priests, and Bradbridge raised these figures to the excellent records of 59 and 56. But after that they steadily fell off again, and both Woolton and Babington failed to induce men to offer themselves in adequate numbers ; so that the former, during his fifteen years of office, ordained an annual average of but 18 deacons and 17 priests, which was further reduced to 16 of each Order under his successor. This weakness in the Church's economy was generally recognised ; and such was the scarcity of ordained clergymen, that laymen, bearing the title of Readers, were put in charge of parishes that lacked incumbents. Regulations for these were agreed upon in 1561 by the bishops of the province, " Guliel. Exon." being one of the signatories. Their functions were specified—they were to read the service, to bury the dead, and to purify women ; but they were not permitted to preach, or to expound the Scriptures, or to minister the Sacraments.†

The lowness of the intellectual standard of the clergy was a cause of serious anxiety about this time, and in Par-

* Oliver's *Bishops*, 138-143 ; *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, I, 326 ; II, 313 ; VI, 147 ; LXII, 439 ; *Elizabethan Bishops*, 142, 192, 259, 317.

† *Concilia*, Wilkins, iv, 225.

liament in 1585 expression was given to the general dissatisfaction throughout the country at "the unlearnednes of the mynisterye," concerning which the Bishops were directed to present a report. Bishop Woolton, therefore, charged his four archdeacons to call their clergy together, including curates, in order to ascertain how many were graduates and how many were non-graduates, to "make tryall as well of their knowledge in the latine tongue as in knowledge of Scripture," and to examine the Letters of Orders of the unbeneficed. The matter had already received careful consideration in the Convocation of Canterbury, which had endeavoured to increase the learning of ministers and to ensure that only fit persons should be admitted to Holy Orders and instituted to benefices; and again, a few months after the resolution of Parliament, the Archbishop took action by issuing instructions to his suffragans. These instructions the Bishop passed on to his archdeacons, charging them to make inquisition concerning "the condition, manners and learning of all and every minister whatsoever," their Ordination, and their previous occupations. They were also to enquire what benefices were appropriated, and how much stipend was allowed to the minister of each. This whole movement seems to have led to happier conditions; for, while the official Ordination lists of Bradbridge show that graduates were very few indeed, they steadily increased in number throughout Woolton's time, and about half of Babington's candidates had taken university degrees, while a good proportion of the rest were described as "literati."

Some extraordinary facts are revealed by an examination of the Ordination returns of this period, the most striking one being the enormous number of Ordinations that were held. During his episcopate of rather over seven years Bishop Bradbridge ordained as many as 435 times, which gives an annual average of 60—more than one for every week. In 1572 he appears to have held 91 Ordinations; but there is a confusion as to dates, so that is not a certainty. There is no doubt, however, about his three succeeding years, when his Ordinations numbered respectively 78, 76, and 75. It is difficult to guess why he should have re-

peated the rite so often, inasmuch as the candidates were comparatively very few, the total number of his deacons being but 425 and that of his priests 407, while in the majority of cases there was only one ordinand, and not often more than two. Bishop Woolton carried on the same use, and in 1581 he held 61 Ordinations for 42 deacons and 41 priests; but his record could not be continued for long at that rate, because the dwindling supply would not provide enough candidates, even when taken singly—one at a time. Thus, his Ordinations in nearly 15 years totalled only 339, his deacons being 262 and his priests 249. One curious feature of Bradbridge's returns is worth mentioning—he held Ordinations in Lezant Church on eight successive days, *viz.*, March 12th—19th, in the year 1573; and another was this, that he ordained twice in one day (September 21st, 1573) in Lezant Church, and again (March 3rd, 1577) in Newton Ferrers Church, as did also Woolton on three or four occasions.

As to places where they ordained, each diocesan followed his own predilection or course of policy. Alley generally chose Exeter, but he often affected Honiton, and occasionally gave candidates an opportunity of meeting him elsewhere—at important towns like Plymouth and Tiverton, Launceston and Truro, or Devonshire villages such as Bampton, Okeford, Bickleigh, Witheridge, East Anstey, and Stoke Rivers, or country places in Cornwall such as Lostwithiel and Egloshayle and St Budock. He also ordained in the private mansions of Mount Edgcumbe, Newnham Park by Plympton, and Arwenack House at Falmouth—apparently as the guest of the Edgcumbes, the Strodes, and the Killigrews. The great majority of Bradbridge's numerous Ordinations were performed in Lezant Church and Newton Ferrers Church, but occasionally he took a series in his Palace at Exeter, and he officiated just a few times in his Cathedral. He also devoted a week or two to Ordinations in each of the churches of Shobrooke, Totnes, and Launceston, and single days at Tiverton and Ashburton, Yealmpton and Revelstoke, Lew Trenchard and St Gerrans. It seems strange indeed that Woolton should never once have held an Ordination in a church: he held one in Kenn Rectory, and two in his lodging

in London (whither he went to attend Parliament), but every other of his hundreds of Ordinations he conducted in his Palace at Exeter—whether in the Hall or in the Chapel, we know not. That, too, was the place chosen by Babington, the sole exception being his first, when he ordained his one candidate both deacon and priest in the choir of the Cathedral.

The Archbishops of the period were diligent in performing their visitatorial functions in the Province of Canterbury—Parker held his Metropolitical Visitation in 1561, Grindal in 1576, and Whitgift in 1584, so that the diocese was subjected to inspection during the episcopates of Alley, Bradbridge, and Woolton. In connection with the last a strange falling-off has to be noted. Up to the time of the Archbishop's Visitation, Woolton's Ordination candidates were fairly numerous, but from that date they at once showed a very serious reduction. The falling-off was very marked, and there was no recovery for the following seven years. The event is not mentioned in the *Registrum Commune*, and one cannot help wondering whether the Archbishop found something very much amiss, and took such action as to discourage candidates from submitting to ordination at the hands of Bishop Woolton.

This period brings us to the commencement of the dead time as regards institutions—for when institutions are few, and consequently incumbents are stationary for long periods, the inference may generally be drawn that Church life is stagnant. Veysey's annual average of institutions was 40, and this fairly high figure was raised to 57 by Turberville—as might be expected, after the troublous times that had gone before. But after maintaining a good level for a while—an average of 38 for Alley, 46 for Bradbridge, and 41 for the first half of Woolton's episcopate—the number fell away to 26 in Babington's few years, and from that low standard it did not recover again.

There is evidence to show that a good deal of the Church's discipline was effective in those days. The Convocation of Canterbury in 1584 took in hand the regulating of penance and the reforming of regulations concerning excommunications, so that both of these must have been in

fairly common use ; and at the end of the volume containing the Exeter Episcopal Registers of 1568-1597 are entered the old rules concerning the solemnizing of matrimony. These rules prohibited weddings from Advent to the day before the octave of the Epiphany, from Septuagesima to Low Sunday, and from Whitsunday to the following Saturday ; and no priest was to perform a marriage elsewhere than in his own church without special permission of the Bishop, under pain of suspension from office for a year.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE CHURCH OF THE EARLY STUARTS.

A LONDONER and a Cambridge man, William Cotton very unwillingly gave up a prebendal stall in St Paul's and the archdeaconry of Lewes to become (in 1598) Bishop of Exeter; for the income was small, the diocese remote, and the work heavy. However, the Queen promised him the precentorship and a canonry in his Cathedral, and Archbishop Whitgift encouraged him with the prospect of an early translation to a wealthier see; so he consented—but only to suffer disappointment in both respects. From the very first start he was unhappy, for he could not get satisfaction from his predecessor in the matter of dilapidation repairs of the palace and other buildings belonging to the see, and had to sue him in the Court of Arches; though, by attending personally to press his claim, he succeeded in making Bishop Babington pay £70 (£660). Then almost at once he was involved in a dispute with the civic authorities concerning the respective liberties of the Church and the City. Nor was he in sympathy with his people, whom he found it so very difficult to manage, that after ten years of misery he wrote to his cousin Sir Robert Cotton, the antiquary, to bespeak his interest, thus giving expression to his plaint:—"I was set on and hastned from Lambeth to adventure upon this Westerne and turbulent people amongst many clamourouse and malitious Rattlehedds, with promise that I should not warme my stoole before I should be removed." He had, he added sadly, watched twenty-two other bishops consecrated or translated, "and I sit still as one nailed to this stoole." But his hints or entreaties were uttered in vain,

and there he had to remain, " nailed to this stoole," for the rest of his life.

If the truth be told—though such considerations did not always carry great weight in those days—he did not deserve promotion, either for success in his episcopal work or for Christian character. When he was consecrated for Exeter, and on the same day his namesake was consecrated for Salisbury, Queen Elizabeth is said to have declared that she had " well cottoned the West " ; but both prelates experienced serious trouble with the Puritans in their dioceses, especially William of Exeter. So obstinate did he find them, that he applied to Sir Robert Cecil for the appointment of an Ecclesiastical Commission, as the most efficacious organ for mastering them ; for he had to complain of the " wildnes and wickednes of the Countrey in some partes," because he found himself set " in the middest of so toughe and stubborne a people." He afterwards boasted that by the help of that Commission he had been able to reform many factious preachers and to reclaim many papists ; but quite futile was his hope of cleansing his diocese of Puritan sectaries, and towards the end of his episcopate he bitterly lamented his " having been so long tormented as in a flame by furies and with a froward and factiouse generation."

We feel that the cause of true religion was not calculated to be fostered by his twenty-three years' example and leadership ; for, though no serious offences are laid to his charge, he was sadly lacking in the Christian graces of humility and self-control, he was over-careful to provide for the members of his family by pushing them into honourable and lucrative posts, and he made much money for himself by the issue of dispensations for eating meat on fasting-days and of licences for marriages in uncanonical seasons. Furthermore, the diocese would not be favourably impressed by his collating himself to a canonry and the precentorship, and instituting himself to the rich benefice of Silverton, in which desirable country parish he chiefly resided until his death in 1621. His will, too, is quite consonant with all this, being mainly concerned with making provision for his family, save for a few small legacies to places with which he was

personally connected—£2 (£16) to the poor of every parish of which he had been incumbent, and £10 (£80) to Silverton.*

It must not be forgotten, however, that the closing years of Elizabeth's reign were fraught with difficulties for the Church, so that there was some excuse to be made both for Bishop Cotton's depression and also for his failures. It was a time when the standard of Churchmanship was a low one—when it was no uncommon occurrence for the ring to be dispensed with in marriage and the sign of the cross in baptism; when some communicants would sit and others stand to receive the Sacrament; when maybe no sermon would be preached, or even homily read, in a church for a whole month; and when even such a grave irregularity might happen as that a person below the Order of deacons would "be suffered to say service in a church, to minister the Sacraments, or bury the dead." All this is manifest from Bishop Cotton's Visitation Articles of Enquiry in 1599, as well as such disloyalty within the Church as prompted the question:—"Hath the minister publicly or otherwise spoken against the order and government of the Church of England or the Book of Common Prayer?" Equally threatening, too, were perils from without, especially the plottings of Roman Catholics, who at that period figured as the enemies of the State even more than of the Church. The "Churchwardens and Swornemen," then, were to answer such interrogatories as these:—"Whether doe you knowe any that dooth obstinately defende papistrie, heresies, errors, false doctrine, schismes, sects, or innovations, and who they bee, and in what poyntes"; and again, "Whether doe you know any receivers of Jesuites, Seminaries, or Massing priests, or any other fugitive persons, or reconciled to the Church of Rome."

The Millenary Petition, which professed to bear the signatures of a thousand "ministers of the Gospel in this land, all groaning as under a common burden of human rites and ceremonies," was not actually signed by nearly that number; but still there existed throughout the country a

* *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, XII, 321; Oliver's *Bishops*, 143; *Elizabethan Bishops*, 391, 399; *Notes and Gleanings*, II, 106; Wills, P.C.C., Dale, 78.

wide-spread sympathy with the matter of its protest. Perhaps churchmen of the present day would hardly have thought that the rites and ceremonies of the end of Elizabeth's reign could truthfully be described as a "burden," from which the clergy needed to be "eased and relieved"; but the plain fact is fully established that, not only were men ignorant and bigoted, but discontent was rife; and it is not surprising that the high-handed treatment meted out to the Puritan representatives at the Hampton Court Conference, and the few trifling concessions granted by way of Prayer Book revision, failed to give satisfaction. How many were the discontented in the Exeter diocese we are not told; but we do know that "certain Ministers of Devon and Cornwall" presented to the Bishop their *Reasons for refusal of subscription to the book of Common Prayer*; and that their action was felt to be sufficiently important to need confutation in public conference and in divers sermons preached in Exeter Cathedral, the respondent being Thomas Hutton, Bachelor of Divinity and Fellow of St John's College at Oxford, who published his *Answer* in 1605. Their objections were, for the most part, such as had already been made public in controversy, among them being mistranslations in the English Bible (a number are specified, and are of a trivial character), the reading of the Apocrypha in Church, the omission of some chapters of the Old and New Testaments from the Table of Lessons, the use of the sign of the cross in Baptism (reckoned to be an infringement of the second Commandment), the promises at the Baptism of Infants, the confident hope expressed in the Burial Service, the Offices of private Baptism and Communion (for "Sacraments by God are ordained to be public actions"), the use of the word "priest," the mention of the Body and Blood of Christ in the Holy Communion, kneeling for reception in the same, the formula "Receive the Holy Ghost" in Ordination, and the unreasonableness of praying God to give us what for our unworthiness we dare not and for our blindness we cannot ask.

Mr Hutton had a simple and straightforward task in meeting these objections; but though it was easy to win a controversial victory, he could hardly be expected to

silence his foes, and next year there came a *Reply*, published anonymously. The writer complains that " many have dipped their pennes in gall, writing with that Sarcasticall bitternes, and Lucianicall scoffings, as though we were men without, and such as towardes whom they were not bound to practise the Rules of common Charitie." He then labours in sixty-six pages to meet the imputations laid against the non-subscribing ministers by " one T. H., a Pen-cryer who has sweat much to make good the cause of Subscription, and to convince all the alleadged Exceptions of weaknes and invaliditie."*

The Roman question does not seem to have greatly concerned the Exeter diocese at this time, but the then Dean was one of the foremost champions of the English Church; and, not content with wielding his very trenchant pen in her defence, he most generously gave of his money for the training and support of a permanent band of Anglican controversialists. If King James I as royal patron figured as the founder and leading benefactor of Chelsea College, whose inauguration was due to an Act of Parliament of 1609, the real promoter of the scheme was Dr Matthew Sutcliffe, who held the deanery of Exeter for the unrivalled period of forty-one years (1588-1629). The College was designed to maintain a number of divines, who were to study, and write controversial works against the papists, and with them were to be associated two or more able historians. King James made the first appointments, Dean Sutcliffe being Provost; and the seventeen Fellows included such eminent men as John Overall and Richard Field, Deans of St Paul's and Gloucester, another Fellow being Archdeacon Helliar of Barnstaple. Towards the very great expenditure that was contemplated Sutcliffe contributed £1,000 (£8,571) and also lands in Devon worth £300 (£2,571) a year; which munificence was made easier for him by his having only a daughter to provide for, and by the fact that he was an extensive pluralist, holding, in addition to prebends at Exeter and at Bath and Wells, the benefices of Harberton, Newton Ferrers, West Alvington, and Lezant. But the first Provost stood alone in his keenness to make the College a success, for the project

* *The Remooval of Certaine Imputations*, preface, 2, 3.

was never well supported, only a small part of the proposed range of buildings was erected, and a generation later Thomas Fuller wrote :—"At this present it hath but little of the case, and nothing of the jewel, for which it was intended. Almost rotten before ripe, and ruinous before it was finished, it stands bleak like 'a lodge in a garden of cucumbers.'" Poor Dean Sutcliffe, who for long had been in high favour at Court, suffered imprisonment for a while for his imprudent opposition to the Spanish match ; and that, added to the failure of his cherished scheme, conduced to make him "when old very morose and testy in his writings."*

From time to time the question of places or sittings in church has figured as a knotty one, and divers prelates have striven to supply a satisfactory answer. One parish in which the difficulty loomed large was Hartland, where Bishop Cotton found it necessary in 1613 to appoint a commission to settle the trouble. The commissioners numbered thirteen, among them being the squire at the Abbey (Nicholas Luttrell), the Vicar (Thomas Dove), the churchwardens, and other leading men of the parish. They performed their task by allotting seats to about 130 men and 190 women ; but, although they would not allow the two sexes to share the same bench or pew (in only two instances were a man and his wife permitted to sit together), they were not separated to such an extent as to have a distinctly different part of the church assigned to each. The arrangement was not only formally accepted by the Diocesan, but, in order "to cut away all opportunity for calumny in future among the parishioners," it was submitted to the Primate (Archbishop Abbot), who granted a deed of confirmation, in which he declared :—"We do by our Archiepiscopal and Metropolitan authority approve, ratify, and confirm the aforesaid assignment and order of sitting in the parish church of Hartland aforesaid." One would have thought that by such means peace, if not satisfaction, would have been ensured ; but this was not at all the case, for not only had a woman to pay

* *Church History*, Fuller, bk X, sec. iii, 19-27 ; *Trans. of Devon. Assoc.*, XXIII, 171.

28s. 10d. (£12) " for costs in lawe awarded against her for not observing the order for the seates in the Church," and likewise a man 26s. 6d. (£11) ; but also two men had to hand over £9 (£74) " for the expences sustained by the parishe in the suite against them touching the seates," and further litigation was at least threatened.*

There is not much to be recorded of Bishop Valentine Cary, who was born at Berwick-on-Tweed, but of unknown descent, though probably connected with Lord Hunsdon. He would seem to have been poor, for he graduated at Cambridge as a sizar of Christ's, afterwards gaining a fellowship at St John's.† His course in life was shaped largely by ambition, and partly also by monetary considerations. His ambition was gratified, if not satisfied, by his having ecclesiastical appointments showered upon him in quick succession, the chief being the mastership of Christ's College at Cambridge, the deanery of St Paul's, and the bishopric of Exeter (1621-1626) ; but in the last-named office he could not have been wealthy, though he held also the chancellorship of the Cathedral and the vicarage of Exminster. He was a persistent opponent of Puritanism, his principles prompting him to purge his College of many of the Fellows, who were Calvinists ; and as a strong churchman and a *protégé* of the unpopular Duke of Buckingham, he must have been somewhat unwelcome in Devon and Cornwall.

We hear more, however, of his difference with the city authorities, and it was unfortunate that in two matters his claim to privilege was ill-advisedly and successfully pressed. One was the insistence of James I that the Bishop should be made a Justice of the Peace for Exeter ; and he was forced upon the Mayor and Corporation, notwithstanding their objecting to this as a breach of their charter rights, and their sending a petition through their Member of Parliament. The other matter was an application for permission to make a private passage from the episcopal grounds through the city wall ; and when the local authorities refused their consent,

* *Devon Notes and Queries*, XI, 26.

† *Notes and Queries*, 3rd Series, vi, 217.

the Bishop appealed to the King, who wrote to them in support of his desire. So tenacious were they of their rights and so careful for the safety of the city, that they did not yield even to the royal injunction; so the King referred the case to the Privy Council, and by them a precept was issued for the granting of the petition under reasonable safeguards.*

By his will, written during his last illness, he bequeathed to Christ's College £50 (£401) for "two flagon potts for the divine service of the Holy Communion of the Lord's Supper in the Colledge Chappell." He stated, too, his desire about his burial—his body was to be laid in his Cathedral, if he died in Exeter; but, if in London, then in St Paul's. As he ended his days in his own house in Drury Lane, the latter was chosen for his tomb, but a stately cenotaph was erected, and is still to be seen, in the north choir aisle at Exeter.†

The fourteen years of Joseph Hall's episcopate enriched the Exeter diocese with a prelate of sweet and conciliatory disposition, one who was eminent for scholarship and still more for his spirituality, and a worthy "son of God" for his exercise of the function of a peacemaker. It was wonderful that he was so broad-minded and tolerant throughout his career, inasmuch as by nurture and education he might well have been expected to grow up as a narrow and bigoted Calvinist. For his mother, a Bambridge from the north country, was a strict Puritan; his Leicestershire home, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, where he was bred and schooled, was imbued with evangelical teaching; and, above all, Emmanuel College, which he entered at the age of fifteen, remaining there for twelve years, was pre-eminently the most Protestant of all the Cambridge Colleges, and was under the headship of the very influential Puritan leader, Dr Lawrence Chaderton.

When, at the age of fifty-three, Hall became Bishop of Exeter, he had had experience of parochial work as incumbent of Hawstead in Suffolk and of Waltham in Essex; he had enjoyed the royal favour of both James I and Charles I, and had been appointed his Domestic Chaplain by Henry, Prince

* *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, IX, 252; Oliver's *Bishops*, 144, 257, 483; *Notes and Gleanings*, II, 158, 163, 164.

† Wills, P.C.C., Hele, 91.

of Wales; he had been honoured by the grant of a prebend at Wolverhampton and the deanery of Worcester, and by the offer of the bishopric of Gloucester, which he refused; and he had made his mark both as a learned and weighty preacher and also as a voluminous theological author. Some of his writings were of a devotional character, such as his *Meditations* and his *Contemplations upon the Principal Passages of the Holy Story*; others—and these his earliest—were books of Satires, and he claimed for himself (not quite accurately) the title of "the first English satirist." But most prominent were his controversial works, which were able and scholarly, though occasionally marred, especially in his diatribes against Roman Catholicism, with language of abusive and scurrilous nature. But, if his pen was wielded chiefly in the defence of the Church of England against Rome, he was also a strenuous opponent of the extreme Puritans; and though the King selected him to be one of the four English representatives at the Synod of Dort in 1618, he used his endeavours there to moderate the virulence of the Calvinist attack against Arminianism. He was not, indeed, sufficiently advanced to satisfy Laud and his party; but he would not refuse to grant that Rome was a part of the Catholic Church, though corrupted by very serious errors—errors which had defiled the Church of England, but from which she had been purged.

As Bishop of Exeter, then, he posed as a moderate man in his views, and tolerant in his dealings with his clergy, at least with those of Puritan convictions, with whom all his past experiences prompted him to sympathize. Maybe that sympathy was strengthened by the knowledge that Laud entertained such distrust of him that he set spies to watch his conduct. He himself tells us of this, though in charitably restrained words:—"I entered upon that place not without much prejudice and suspicion on some hands; for some, that sat at the stern of the Church, had me in great jealousy for too much favour of Puritanism. I soon had intelligence who were set over me for espials. My ways were curiously observed and scanned." But he was able thus to describe his wise and successful policy:—"However, I took the

resolution to follow those courses which might most conduce to the peace and happiness of my new and weighty charge. Finding therefore some factious spirits (popish agents) very busy in that diocese, I used all fair and gentle means to win them to good order; and therein so happily prevailed, that, saving two of that numerous clergy who continuing in the refractoriness fled away from censure, they were all perfectly reclaimed: so that I had not one minister professedly opposite to the anciently received orders (for I was never guilty of urging any new impositions) of the Church in that large diocese." And yet it would seem that Laud's "espials" were due more to caution than to opposition; for when, years afterwards, the Archbishop in his trial was accused of having given preferment "only to such men as were for ceremonies, popery and Arminianism," he parried the charge by declaring that the appointment of Hall to Exeter was his doing. Still, the Bishop was seriously perturbed by these precautionary measures, so much so that he declares, "The billows went so high that I was three several times on my knees to his Majesty to answer these great criminations"; and to Laud he protested that "rather than I would be obnoxious to those slanderous tongues of his misinformers, I would cast up my rochet."*

A signal example of his tactful and tolerant treatment of his clergy is afforded by his attitude to the unfortunate controversy concerning the *Book of Sports*, which was reissued in 1633, and by the King's command was to be read in all churches, with the penalty of suspension or deprivation for non-compliance. Bishop Hall seems to have tacitly disregarded the royal decree, there being no record of any notice taken of clerical delinquents in his diocese.† Notwithstanding this, however, the Primate a year later was favourably impressed with the condition of the diocese, his report after his Visitation containing this encomium:— "For Exeter, where, according to many complaints that had been made here above, I might have expected many things out of order, I must do my Lord the Bishop this right,

* *Life*, G. Lewis, 277, 278, 298.

† *Life*, 301; *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, XXIV, 77.

that for your Majesty's instructions they have been carefully observed." And again, in 1637, he states :—" The bishop of this diocese assures me that all things are in very good order. And indeed I think the diocese is well amended within these few years, his lordship having been very careful, both in his visitations and otherwise." One consequence of all this was that friendly relations bound together in mutual confidence the ruler and the ruled. " I had peace and comfort at home," he said, " in the happy sense of that general unanimity and loving correspondence of my clergy, till the last year of my presiding there, after the synodical oath was set on foot."

The reference in these last words is to the carelessness of the wording of the so-called " Etcaetera oath," all clergymen being bound by a canon of 1640 to swear that they would maintain " the government of this Church by archbishops, bishops, deans, and archdeacons, et caetera, as it stands now established." Silly men contended that dangerous matters lurked beneath that mysterious expression " et caetera," and the rebellion against the oath was general. Bishop Hall prudently refrained from administering the oath to his clergy ; but he issued his explanation of its meaning and scope, and therefore was considered to be a champion of it ; whereby he incurred a share of the popular animosity against Laud and his party.*

One of the reasons that brought Bishop Hall under suspicion was his toleration of lecturers. Lectureships existed in pre-Reformation times in some few places, but were multiplied about the commencement of his episcopate, when legal sanction was given to a scheme for endowing such in churches whose clergy were not qualified to preach. The opportunity was extensively used by the Puritans, and its operation was found to be both subversive of Church order and also hateful to the High Church party ; so that Archbishop Laud procured legislation, which checked, though it failed to abolish, the practice. The Long Parliament greatly encouraged the system, which happily provided preaching in many parishes that lacked it, but unhappily

* *Life*, 325 ; *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, XXIV, 78.

led to ill feeling and strife between the incumbent and the intruded lecturer. Bishop Hall's policy was to abstain from interfering with his lecturers, so long as they kept their preaching within reasonable bounds and did not stir up strife; but his wise acquiescence did not commend him to the higher authorities, who considered him to be wrongly favouring Puritanism. In the diocese of Exeter we have a record of a lecturer as early as 1625 at Barnstaple, when the town appointed for three years Benjamin Coxe, who undertook "to reade a weekly lecture in the parishe Churche of Barnestaple to and for the instruction of the inhabitants thereof in the waies of their salvation." He was to have a stipend of £50 (£398) a year, and Mr Roger Beaple, merchant, bequeathed £20 (£159) "to provide a house for the lecturer." Lectureships were founded at Pilton in 1642 and at Plymouth in the following year, and others at later dates, the still existing Duncombe Lectureship at Kingsbridge being founded by the will of William Duncombe (1691), who endowed it with £120 per annum and a residence.*

As a set-off against such tolerance of Puritans must be mentioned his whole-hearted support of the Laudian party in their effort to bring back the altar in every church to its ancient position. This long disputed topic came prominently forward in 1633 owing to the action of the Dean and Chapter of St Paul's, who so replaced the altar—enclosing it in rails—in their newly restored Church of St Gregory's, close to their Cathedral. The matter was brought before the Privy Council, and the King ruled that the Dean and Chapter had acted rightly. This afforded sufficient precedent for episcopal injunctions of like tenour, and Bishop Hall used his best endeavours to enforce conformity in his diocese.†

In some respects the requirements with regard to Church services at that age seem to us very small. For instance, three celebrations of the Holy Communion in a year were regarded as sufficient; an incumbent who was licensed to

* *Life*, 299; *English Ch. Hist.*, Shaw, II, 182, 300; *Prayer Book Dic..*, 432; *Ch. of St Peter, Barnstaple*, 28, 106.

† Gee and Hardy, 533; *Life*, 301.

preach need not deliver more than one sermon on Sunday, and if he was not licensed—no uncommon condition in those days—he was not bound to provide a preacher more often than once a month ; and the sixteenth Article of Enquiry at the Visitation of 1638 seems to betray a low standard of clerical life :—" Whether your Minister has commonly given himselfe to any base or servile labour, or to drinking and riot, or to playing at Dice, Cards, or Tables, or is hee reputed to be an incontinent person ? " Further, this question is suggestive of too frequent acts of desecration :—" Is your Communion Table used unfitly and prophanely by any person, by sitting, or writing upon it, or any other undecent action ? "

But in other ways, Church order and discipline were required in a considerable degree. All persons of sixteen years of age were to communicate thrice in the year, and those who did not obey were to be reported to the Bishop ; on every Sunday and Holy Day the minister was to catechize the young and the ignorant for half an hour before Evensong ; the Litany was to be read on Wednesdays and Fridays, and every householder within half a mile of the church was to send one of his household to join in the service ; the week's Holy Days and fasting-days were to be declared each Sunday, and Rogationtide was to be marked by perambulations, and marriages were forbidden in Lent and at other uncanonical times, except by licence ; the Canons were to be read in church once a year, and twice a year the names of excommunicates in the parish ; and no recusant or suicide or excommunicate person was to be buried in the churchyard. Furthermore, the church was to be provided with a Bible, two Prayer Books, the Homilies, and Bishop Jewell's works, and with two surplices for the minister and a rochet for the clerk—who was always to be vested for service ; and the minister was ordinarily to wear " apparell decent and fit for his calling," *viz.*, cassock, gown, tippet, and square cap. Evidently the Church was struggling hard to emerge from the neglect and disorder of the Elizabethan age.

It is from the Litany of Luther that we derive the idea of our petition for " pity upon all prisoners and captives " ; and this expression in our Litany is an expansion and modifi-

cation of his, which prays "that it may please Thee to set captives free." The prayer was one that had special suitability in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when many Englishmen were captured by Algerian pirates and sold into slavery in North Africa. The ransoming of such captives was frequently the object of briefs issued at that period for the collecting of alms in church, *e.g.*, St Peter's at Tiverton in 1617 gave 10s. (82s.) "towards a briefe for certen prisoners in Barbarie"; and at Farnham in Essex are preserved a number of briefs "for the redemption of a multitude of poor Christians being in slavery by the Turkes at Algiers, Sallee, and other places." Bishop Hall found himself in perplexity in 1637, for a number of men of Devon and Cornwall were released from captivity in Morocco, and it transpired that they had apostatized from Christianity and become Moslems. The Archbishop was consulted, and a form for their readmission into the church was compiled and approved by the King, Laud giving instructions to the Bishop to preserve it, in order that it might serve "as a precedent for future times, if there should be any more sad examples of apostacy from the faith."*

His diocese might well be proud of Bishop Hall for his able and ardent championship of the Church and her system. On no topic did he shine more eminently than in his defence of episcopacy, being the acknowledged leader when the highest Order was attacked. Most famous was his *Episcopacy by Divine Right*, which was called forth by the troubles in Scotland; and when a Bill for depriving the Bishops of their seats in the House of Lords was sent up by the Commons in 1641, it was he who acted as spokesman for his fellows in a great speech in the Upper Chamber. There followed soon after his *Humble Remonstrance for Liturgy and Episcopacy*, and his long literary controversy with the Smectymnuans, with whom John Milton joined himself; but this takes us away from Exeter, for before the end of 1641 Bishop Hall was translated to Norwich. It is evident that he enjoyed

* *Life*, 303; *Ch. of St Peter, Tiverton*, 203; *Farnham, Essex*, J. G. Geare, 115.

the confidence and affection of his people—indeed, he is described as the most popular bishop in England—and they showed their feelings by their petition with eight thousand signatures against the Bill of the Commons, and by flocking out in their hundreds to welcome him on his return home after his successful speech in the Lords.*

A few points may be mentioned concerning Bishop Hall's personal history. As the income of the see was small, he was permitted to hold *in commendam* the rectory of St Breocke in Cornwall. We cannot blame him for this, and indeed his whole history exculpates him from any accusation of covetousness; but of nepotism he cannot be acquitted, though it is only just that we should bear in mind that this was a common fault at that period. Two of his sons were too young for ecclesiastical office, but the other four all received high promotion from him—Robert became Canon of Exeter and Archdeacon of Cornwall, Joseph was Registrar of the diocese, George was given a prebendal stall and succeeded his brother as Archdeacon of Cornwall, and Samuel was made Subdean at the early age of twenty-five. Furthermore, William Peterson became Dean only ten days before his marriage with the Bishop's daughter, and his brother Robert Peterson was promoted to the subdeanery. When we note that the Bishop had no opportunity of appointing to the precentorship, the chancellorship, and the archdeaconries of Totnes and Barnstaple, we are bound to acknowledge that the members of his family were well cared for.

The poor man must often afterwards have looked back on his Exeter days with wistful longing, for on his translation his troubles at once began. He and his brethren were condemned by Parliament, committed to the Tower, and deprived of all their privileges and dignities. Hardly had the new Bishop taken up his residence at Norwich when his revenues were impounded, his palace invaded, and all his goods sold, "not leaving so much as a dozen of trenchers or the children's pictures." Ere long he and his family were turned out into the street, and were dependent on charity for a night's lodging.

* *Life*, 315, 336, 339, 340, 341.

In poverty and retirement he spent the last nine years of his life in the village of Heigham, just outside the city, and there he died in 1656 at the age of eighty-two.*

The Ordination records of the three bishops of this period are thoroughly characteristic of the men. The easy-going Cotton, who studied his own convenience and was not troubled by scruples as to Church order, usually ordained at Silverton, where he resided. He officiated only 19 times in his Cathedral and 36 times in his Palace, and all the rest of his 190 Ordinations were held at Silverton, except for 4 or 5 in London, 1 at Blisland, and 1 in St Lawrence's Church at Exeter. The entries are not sufficiently full to show how many times he ordained in the rectory house at Silverton, so that we cannot tell whether the church or the house was more commonly chosen. But the latter is mentioned sufficiently often to prove that he ordained there frequently; and on three occasions it is even stated that he conferred the Holy Orders of the diaconate and the priesthood in the barn that stood in the garden attached to the rectory house.† We notice, too, that it was usual with him to admit a man to both deacon's and priest's Orders at the same time.

The neglectful Cary held only 4 Ordinations in his 4½ years, with the result that his ordinands were few, being an annual average of only 9 deacons and 11 priests—a serious drop from the 24 and 23 of Bishop Cotton. It is to his credit, however, that he ministered the sacred rite only in the Cathedral or (once) in the Palace.

With Bishop Hall we find ourselves in a more churchly atmosphere. Normally, he fixed his Ordinations for the Embertide Sundays; and for the purpose he used his Cathedral (only four times did he break his rule, resorting once to Heavitree Church and thrice to his Palace Chapel). Also he was obedient to the canon which enacts that "no bishop shall make any person a deacon and a minister both together

* *Life*, 381, 407; *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, XXIV, 78, 79.

† The word used in the Bishop's *Register* is a strange one—apparently it is even quite unique: but "in mustolo Domi," "in mustolo suo," "in mustolo suo in hortis rectorie de Silferton," seem to be rightly interpreted as indicating the barn.

upon one day"; and until the times of disorder he maintained a yearly average of 25 ordinands of either degree. In his time, too, there was a marked improvement in the educational standard of the candidates; for, whereas even in Cotton's later years the graduates scarcely exceeded 50 per cent., throughout Hall's episcopate they averaged 78. The institutions to benefices (25 per annum under Cotton and Cary, and 29 under Hall) had now fallen to the common rate, which continued for generations afterwards, save for the disturbing influences of the Puritan tyranny.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE PURITAN TYRANNY.

RALPH BROWNRIGG was a native of Bishop Hall's new diocese, being born and bred at Ipswich; and at Cambridge, where he was a prominent scholar, he figured as a strict Calvinist, but a loyal defender of episcopacy and of the *Book of Common Prayer*. While holding the mastership of St Catharine's Hall and the archdeaconry of Coventry and a canonry at Durham, he was appointed Bishop of Exeter; but, though consecrated by Archbishop Laud in 1642, he never even entered his diocese, being daunted by the political troubles that broke out about that time. However, he boldly preached a royalist sermon before the University in 1645—thereby losing his mastership, so that he had to leave Cambridge, having previously been deprived of his other preferments. A friend offered him a home at Sonning in Berkshire, where he mostly resided; but near the end of his life the Benchers of the Temple chose him as their Preacher, in which work he had great success; and when, after an almost blank episcopate of seventeen years he died in 1659 at the age of 67, the Templars paid the expenses of his funeral, and provided his grave in their church.*

His will, with its beautifully pious expressions, reads like that of a man who was truly religious. Here is its opening sentence:—"First, I humbly recomend myself soule and body into the gracious guidance and preservation of Allmighty God while this life continueth, and when it shall please God to end my dayes in this world I betake my poore and sinefull soule to his precious mercy through the meritts of his Blessed Sonne Jesus Christ." The unfortunate man had not much to bestow, as he himself explains, when he speaks of his "worldly good, the most of which in these troublesome times have been spente in my maintenance,

* *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, VII, 83; Oliver's *Bishops*, 147.

or are detained from me by the tenants of my bishoprick or other wayes." However, he left a large number of gifts to friends, among them being rings to my Lord of Durham (Bishop Cosin) and to Mr Sancroft (afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury).*

The feeling against the Bishops was strong in the land—not general, indeed, but animating both the ruling class and the turbulent masses. Even the popularity of Hall had not withheld the men of Exeter and of Devon from sending to Parliament petitions against episcopacy as early as February 1641, when other counties were doing the same; and, in the following October, the Commons voted in favour of depriving the Bishops of their seats in the Lords, the Bill becoming law early next year, when passed by the Lords and signed by the King. The Lower House had already decided (June 1641) that "all deans, deans and chapters, archdeacons, prebendaries, chanters, canons, and petty canons, and their officers, shall be utterly abolished and taken away out of the Church." †

The spirit of the age was manifested in the acts of the populace, thus encouraged by the resolutions of their legislators; and we have the graphic and grievous narrative of Bishop Hall to tell us how his Cathedral at Norwich was desecrated by "the furious sacrilege whereof our eyes and ears were the sad witnesses":—"What a hideous triumph on the market-day before all the country, when in a kind of sacrilegious and profane procession all the organ-pipes, vestments, both copes and surplices, together with the leaden cross which had been newly sawn down from over the Green-Yard pulpit, and the service books and sing books that could be had, were carried to the fire in the public market-place; a lewd wretch walking before the train, in his cope trailing in the dirt, with a service book in his hand, imitating in an impious scorn the tune, and usurping the words of the Litany used formerly in the Church. Near the public cross all these monuments of idolatry must be sacrificed to the fire; not without much ostentation of a zealous joy, in dis-

* Wills, P.P.C., Nabbs, 159.

† *English Ch. Hist.*, Shaw, I, 43, 90, 118.

charging ordinance, to the cost of some who professed how much they had longed to see that day. Neither was it any news upon this Guild-day to have the cathedral, now open on all sides, to be filled with musketeers, waiting for the mayor's return, drinking and tobacconing as freely as if it had turned ale house." There is extant a detailed account of even more abhorrent treatment of Exeter Cathedral; but that description in Dr Bruno Ryves's *Mercurius Rusticus* is so grossly exaggerated that we cannot put reliance in it, though we do know that he was correct in stating that the organ was destroyed. Prebendary Reynolds, however, in a sermon preached on the spot in 1684, reminded his hearers that "many of us have seen not only the monuments of the dead, but even the very ashes and bones of some of them, disturbed and violated." *

It would have been more heroic and admirable on the part of Brownrigg if he had adventured himself in the diocese, to whose spiritual service he had been called and had pledged himself, instead of absenting himself in safer retirement far away from his flock; but doubtless he would have received little or no consideration from the civil authorities, however much his self-sacrifice and devotion to duty might have put heart into the faithful among both the clergy and the laity. Nearly a year before his consecration, the Commons had made clear their determination with regard to Church property; and at last, in 1646, an ordinance was passed for the sale of episcopal estates, followed in 1649 by a similar one dealing with the lands of deans and chapters. The see of Exeter was at that time possessed of eight manors—Bishop's Nympton and Peterhays in Devon, and Lawhitton, Cuddenbeak, Penryn, Tregeare, Burneir, and Cargoll in Cornwall, together with the rectories of Pinhoe, Brampford Speke, and St Goran; and these, together with the Palace and a few other smaller items, producing an annual revenue of £563 (£4,039), were all brought under the hammer.†

To take the place of the Church of England organization

* *Life of Bp. Hall*, 401; *Hist. of Exeter*, Oliver, 122, 125.

† *English Ch. Hist.*, Shaw, I, 94,; II, 213, 514, 558; Oliver's *Bishops*, 149.

a Presbyterian system was established in 1648, after three or four years' preliminary discussions in the House of Commons, part of the moneys accruing from the sale of episcopal and chapter property being utilized for the payment of ministers and schoolmasters and for fabric repairs. That system was methodically and exactly worked out, and as a paper scheme it seemed to have been perfected. The unit at the bottom of the scale was a parish or group of parishes, which was governed by an eldership, consisting of the minister and a number of elected elders, who were to meet weekly. Seven or more such elderships were to form a group or district, whose executive—called a "classis"—was to comprise one minister and two or three or four elders from each eldership, and the classis was to hold monthly meetings. All the classes in any county were to send representatives—two ministers and four elders from each classis—to form a Provincial Assembly, meeting every six months. And a National Assembly was to be composed of delegates (two ministers and four elders) from each Provincial Assembly together with five from each university. The chief functions of the eldership were the ruling of individual members of the congregation, and the regulating of the administration of the Sacrament. The classis was to examine and ordain candidates for the ministry, to judge accusations brought against ministers, and to decide cases of doctrine. Controversies concerning the faith were to be brought before the higher Courts; and there might be appeals from one body to another, Parliament being supreme over all.

By the application of this arrangement to the Exeter diocese, Devonshire was divided into seven districts and Cornwall into three, each with its own classis. Exeter was to be the place of meeting for the Provincial Assembly of the former, and the seven divisions were (1) south-central, including Chudleigh, Ashburton, and Ipplepen; (2) north-central—the region around Crediton; (3) southern, reaching from Paignton to Ugborough and Thurlestone; (4) western, comprising Plymouth, Okehampton, and Werrington; (5) northern—the whole country from Holsworthy to Ilfracombe and Worlington; (6) north-eastern, taking in Tiverton

and Honiton; and (7) south-eastern—the district from Axmouth to Topsham and Kenton. Thus their places of meeting would probably be Newton Abbot, Crediton, Totnes, Plymouth, Barnstaple, Tiverton, and Ottery St Mary. This disposition was inaugurated in 1649, and no doubt Cornwall was organized about the same time, there being three divisions—eastern, central, and western, with Bodmin for the meeting-place of the Provincial Assembly, and presumably Launceston, Bodmin, and Truro as the centres for the classes.*

This Presbyterian system proved to be a failure, being a weakling even from its birth; and that was evidenced by the smallness of the number of elderships that were established, by the unwillingness of elderships to elect delegates to represent them in the classis, and by the scanty attendance of ministers and of representative elders at meetings. The failure was to be accounted for partly by the fact that Presbyterianism was not indigenous to England. It was not a natural growth, and did not suit the national temper, so that the power of Parliament had to be exercised in order to impress it on the people. Besides, the practical difficulties of working so elaborate a system were well nigh insuperable, it being utterly unreasonable to expect men, especially laymen, frequently to undertake long journeys across country in order to attend meetings. How many Okehampton shopkeepers would ride thirty miles down to Plymouth to be present at the monthly classis, or how many farmers would be able to leave their work at Bradworthy or Pyworthy for a similar outing of several days to Barnstaple? The consequence was that the organization failed in two respects—ordination was neglected, because the classis was not in working order; and congregational discipline fell into abeyance, especially with regard to admission to the Sacrament, on account of the inefficiency of the eldership. Therefore, as a supplement to the Presbyterian system, and in order to supply these two wants, Voluntary Associations, consisting of a number of ministers banded together, came into being, beginning in 1653.†

* *English Ch. Hist.*, Shaw, II, 19-21, 374, 446.

† *English Ch. Hist.*, Shaw, II, 98-101, 152.

Presbyterianism, however, continued to exist till 1660, for Parliament never annulled it, or established Independency in its place; but in later years it suffered sorely from lack of Government support, the military party who were in power being Independents by creed. The growth of the spirit of tolerance, too, had an adverse effect, for the Presbyterian system was antagonistic to toleration, and therein it was backed up by the Scotch; but the Independents pressed for it, and were supported by the army. For years the topic was debated in Parliament, though without definite result; but gradually the Independents gained admission to the Sacrament, and when a minister refused to administer to them, either he was dismissed, or—more frequently—the Sacrament was no longer administered. Furthermore, in a number of places Independent congregations were making good their claim to the use of the parish church for their own services. This led to grave difficulties as to arrangement, with the result that the Presbyterians gradually lost their position of pre-eminence.*

A case in point was Exeter Cathedral—known to scrupulous Puritans as "the great Church," or "Peter's Church." Both parties desired to use it as a place of worship, and both wanted their services at the same hour, whereby much strife was gendered. In this case the great size of the edifice made a compromise possible, the eastern half, or "Peter's-east," being assigned to the Independents, and the nave, or "Peter's-west," to the Presbyterians, with the erection of a wall on the choir-screen to form a barrier between them. An Act of the City Council (August 11th, 1657) thus refers to it:—"We doe agree that the partition of the Cathedrall Church of S. Peter's bee made with a brick wall on the East part of the Crosse Ile where the Organs stood, closeing upp the bodye or midle Ile uppon a foundacon wch is already there and filling upp the place where the dores stand in the Ile sides leading to the Quire. Mr Walter Deeble hath undertaken to make this partition wall for £150 (£1,015), well and sufficiently with brick and plastering." At the

* *English Ch. Hist.*, Shaw, II, 33, 97.

Restoration that "Babylonish wall" was removed, and all evidences of the division have now disappeared; but many can still remember the doorway that had been opened up in the east wall of the Speke Chantry Chapel for the use of the Independent worshippers in Peter's-east.*

Of other ecclesiastical edifices at Exeter the Cloisters were secured for £1,600 (£10,831) for a serge-market, new buildings being erected for the purpose, and, apparently, the old demolished to make way for them. The books of the Chapter Library—located over the south walk of the cloisters—were removed to St John's Hospital, and shortly afterwards to the Lady Chapel, which was fitted up for their reception. The City bought the Bishop's Palace from Parliament for the sum of £450 (£3,046), and soon after it was leased to a sugar-baker, who retained possession of it till the Restoration. The Treasurer's house on the north side of the Cathedral was converted into a Workhouse for the poor and a House of Correction for vagrants and disorderly persons. The Hall of the Vicars Choral was purchased by the Corporation and used as a wool-hall—a valuable acquisition, the wool trade being the chief industry of Exeter at that period.†

There were at the time seventeen parish churches in the city of Exeter, and, as it was found to be very difficult to raise sufficient money for ministers' stipends, advantage was taken of an enabling Act of Parliament, specially passed in 1656, to sell thirteen of these, reserving for purposes of worship only four, namely, St Mary Major's, St Petrock's, St Mary Arches, and St Edmund's. Each of these was to have its own minister, and there was to be one other, who might help his brethren when wanted; and thus, including the two attached to the Cathedral, it was considered that seven ministers would suffice for the city, St Sidwell's having an extra one for itself. The other thirteen churches were offered for public auction; but popular indignation was so strongly expressed that, instead, the parishioners were given

* *Gleanings from Records of Exeter*, 172; *Exeter Cathedral*, 38.

† *Gleanings from Records of Exeter*, 131, 154, 174; Oliver's *Bishops*, 247, 258; *Topog. of Ex. Cath. Close*, 87; *Notes and Gleanings*, I, 186.

the opportunity of purchasing or renting their own churches, it being stipulated that they should be used only as schools or as burial places. St Paul's was then sold for £105 (£707); Holy Trinity, St George's, St Martin's, and St Lawrence's for £100 (£674) each; St Kerrian's for £66 13s. 4d. (£449); and St Pancras's for £50 (£337). St Stephen's, with cellar beneath, went to a private purchaser for £230 (£1,549), and All Hallows', Goldsmith Street, for £50 (£337). The others—All Hallows'-on-the-Walls, priced at £33 6s. 8d. (£224), St John's and St Mary Steps at £100 (£674) each, and St Olave's—were handed over to St John's Hospital in part payment of a debt owing by the Corporation.*

It would have been a graceful act of toleration, if one or two of these disused churches had been granted to members of the Church of England for their worship; but adherents of the proscribed religion could only meet in secret, and for that they were liable to punishment. Cotton and Woollcombe tell of "several cases before the magistrates for travelling from Topsham to the Castle Inn, Exeter, for the purpose of attending some religious service, and one, who from conscientious motives refused to pay the fine inflicted, was set in the stocks; and there is the case of John Blackmore, an inn-holder, whose house having been suspected by the constables is burst open, and in a room many persons of quality, both male and female, are discovered in the act of receiving the Lord's Supper and immediately dispersed."†

It is evident that throughout that period much of the business part of the system of the Church of England continued in operation. Tithes, firstfruits, and tenths were still paid—but to the State authorities instead of to the Church. Private patronage was not always interfered with, though of course ecclesiastical patronage was administered by the Government, or sometimes by popular election. In those cases, however, in which Royalist clergy had been deprived, the benefices were filled up by the secular authority. Furthermore, churchwardens seem to have been regularly appointed

* *Gleanings from Records of Exeter*, 169, 176; Oliver, *Hist. of Exeter*, 119.

† *Gleanings from Records of Exeter*, 174.

each Easter as of yore, and annually rendered their accounts. But the great change was in the *personnel* of the clergy. A considerable number, it is true, remained in their livings, outwardly conforming to the new *régime*, accepting the Solemn League and Covenant in 1643, and consenting to the substituting of the *Directory for Public Worship* in place of the *Book of Common Prayer* in 1645. But not a few had left their cures at the outbreak of civil war, and had gone to join the King's forces; later all cathedral and diocesan officials, such as deans and canons and archdeacons, were abolished; and above all, Parliament was careful to remove "superstitious, innovating, scandalous, and malignant clergy"—a description which was made to cover many more than would appear at first sight.

It is no easy task to estimate the number of clerics who were thus deprived; but our chief guide is the Reverend John Walker, who wrote *An attempt towards recovering an account of the numbers and sufferings of the Clergy of the Church of England in the times of the Grand Rebellion.* This work, indeed, was not published till seventy years after the event; but it embodies the assiduous and careful researches of more than ten years; and as the author was a native of Exeter, and was all that while Rector of St Mary Major's in that city, his testimony is valuable, especially as regards his own diocese. From him and from other historians we learn that the deprivations were exceedingly numerous. About 110 London clergymen were ejected; over 230 Masters, Fellows, and Chaplains were turned out at Cambridge, Peterhouse losing its Master (John Cosin) and all but one of its 22 Fellows; and the sweeping away of the Cathedral establishments accounted for at least 1,000 more. Petitions presented to Fairfax in 1647 and to Cromwell in 1655 spoke of "many thousands" of sufferers, and these references were not contradicted. Walker calculated the number of deprived incumbents as 5,000, and the total of those silenced, including curates and private chaplains, those not yet placed and candidates for the ministry, as "nothing short of 10,000." In his erudite and accurate monograph on *Dr John Walker and the Sufferings of the Clergy* Mr G. B. Tatham reckons

"the total parochial sequestrations" at approximately 3,500. Thus, when diocesan and cathedral dignitaries, those holding posts at the universities, and private chaplains are added, it is evident that 5,000 is an under-estimate rather than an over-estimate of the total number of clerical deprivations.*

The diocese of Exeter was severely affected by these tyrannical proceedings, though not so severely as some other parts of the country. Walker could discover only one incumbent in Exeter who retained his benefice in those troublous times, and he was a complier. In Devonshire there were then about 409 livings, and in Cornwall about 160, and from the former 143 incumbents were ejected (the poet Robert Herrick of Dean Prior was one), and from the latter 73—a total of 216.†

One of the best known cases was that of Martin Blake, who had been Vicar of Barnstaple since 1628; for, though he was never actually deprived, he was subjected to cruel persecution. On false evidence, trumped up by spiteful parishioners, who suspected him of being a royalist, he was condemned in 1646 by members of the Committee of Parliament for Plundered Ministers, sitting at Exeter, and was suspended from his office as a delinquent. For years his position was extremely precarious. Appeals were sent to London, and personal visits paid, both by Blake and his friends, and also by his foes, and each party claimed that favourable rulings had been given by the Protector. Sometimes Blake remained in possession, and was suffered to minister to his flock: sometimes he was ejected from his benefice and his home, and he was even kept a prisoner at Exeter for several weeks. Ultimately, however, he was re-instated by the Long Parliament, just previous to the Restoration.‡

Vacancies were filled, when possible, by the appointment of "able and sufficient preaching ministers," whose stipends

* *Sufferings of the Clergy*, I, 200; II, 152, 162, 180; *Do., epitomised*, 300, 301; Tatham, 132.

† G. B. Tatham, 160.

‡ *Life*, 41, 104, 143, 151.

were found from the sequestrated revenues of the Church, the sum aimed at being £100 (£687) for each; but increasing difficulty was experienced with regard to tithe, many men posing as conscientious objectors, when called upon to pay tithes to ministers who owed their appointment to Parliament only.*

The Exeter Municipal Records contain abundant testimony of the petty persecutions that were suffered by the people through the exercise of the rigid principles of Presbyterianism. Sundays must be kept with more than sabbatarian strictness; and not only were persons fined or imprisoned for being absent from church and for travelling and for doing out-of-door work on those days, but it was a frequently punished offence to dress or cook food in one's own house, or to entertain friends at a meal, or even to heat the oven. A woman was put in the stocks, because she did not go to church, but spent most of the day in knitting; a dyer and his wife were fined for having company at breakfast on the Lord's Day—as deposed by one of the guests, whereupon the host retaliated by having the guest fined for having uttered an oath; a man and his wife and her sister were summoned for walking in the fields; and the following was resolved:—"Ordered that publique notice be given by the Belman that hence-forward noe Baker within this Cittie or County doe presume to sett their household bread into their ovens on Saturday night as formerly they have done, and draw the same out againe about 5 of the Clock next morning being the Saboth day, but that they sett in and drawe out the bread before tenn of the Clocke Saterday at night." What a hatefully dull and dreary day must Sunday have been to the Exeter children, whose natural and innocent tendencies were to be repressed by this order:—"All who have the care or education of children and servants under 14 years of age, must not permit them on the Lord's day to use or exercise any sport, pleasure, or pastime, or be present at the same. All persons above 14 for such offence to forfeit 5s., and parents and guardians of those under 14 to be fined 1s., or in default

* *English Ch. Hist.*, Shaw, II, 190, 196, 254, 257, 277.

put in the Stocks for 3 hours." Another order, consequent on complaints that children had been seen playing in the Close on Sunday, even went so far as to enact :—" A cage to be made and set up about the middle part of St Peter's Churchyard for the putting of such boys and others in, as shall disturb the Ministers in sermon time." *

Strenuous efforts were made to stop any indiscretions in speech, and the penalty for an oath was 5s. (35s.), such mild expressions as " by my faith " and " as I live," or the utterance of any opprobrious or abusive epithets, being as costly as a full-mouthed expletive. Afterwards, however, a member of the proletariat was enabled to swear at a slightly cheaper rate, by virtue of an Act of Parliament of 1650 " for the better preventing and suppressing of prophane swearing and cursing," which formulated this graduated scale of fines for a first offence :—30s. (10 guineas) for a nobleman, 20s. (£7) for a baronet or knight, 10s. (£3 10s.) for an esquire, 6s. 8d. (46s. 8d.) for a gentleman, and 3s. 4d. (23s. 4d.) for any other person.†

Games of cards were strictly forbidden, especially that known as " shuffle-boards " ; and, seeing that morality must be carefully safeguarded, young women were condemned for keeping company with soldiers, or even for talking to them. A couple were accused " for keeping company together, they being engaged to be married " ; and it is even recorded that " Jane Dicker was seen in her own house suspiciously near Francis Hamlin by a person who was passing near the door, and both committed to Bridewell." Young women might give occasion to Satan if they were unoccupied ; so the case of " Margarett Rennell, spinster," was not exceptional, when she was " ordered to get herself into service within a fortnight or to go to the Bridewell."‡

There is much in all this that seems to us ludicrous : much that is petty and childish. But there is a serious and an important aspect of it, *viz.*, that so inquisitorial

* *Gleanings from Records of Exeter*, 123, 147, 165, 167.
† *Gleanings from Records of Exeter*, 124, 147, 206.
‡ *Gleanings from Records of Exeter*, 124, 125, 147, 148.

and tyrannical an application of these laws could not fail to breed discontent, and even the spirit of revolt, against the religion and morality that bound people in such tight and galling trammels ; with the result that, when Puritanism lost its power, the welcome accorded to the restored monarchy and Church was united with an outbreak of frivolity and profligacy, such as England had never known before, and from which she has not even yet recovered.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE LATER STUARTS AND THE REVOLUTION.

THE effects of the Restoration were soon felt in the west, and before Christmas the newly consecrated Bishop, John Gauden, arrived, being accorded a magnificent welcome, for "he was in the way saluted by sundry gentlemen, both of the city and the country, and, being attended on by several coaches and some hundreds of horse, was with great joy and solemnity brought herein." The Palace, however, was not fit to receive him, having for years been used as a sugar refinery; so he was fain to accept the hospitality of the late mayor, Thomas Ford. Gauden was an East Anglian, son of an Essex vicar, and schooled at Bury St Edmund's; and he had already become famous as an author, chiefly of books half-religious and half-political. His opinions had originally been Parliamentarian—he had preached acceptably before the Long Parliament, he had been chosen a member of the Assembly of Divines, and he is said to have signed the Solemn League and Covenant; but at the Restoration he was accepted by the Royalists as one of themselves, being appointed a chaplain to Charles II and raised to the episcopate. We should like to believe that his opinions had gradually undergone a genuine conversion, and in truth there is evidence of his having been dissatisfied with the Puritan position. We fear, however, that it must be allowed that he found it politic to trim his sails so as to catch both winds; and thus by conforming to Presbyterianism he succeeded in retaining his preferments, but meanwhile he wrote books in defence of Charles I and the Church of England, though he prudently delayed till safer times the publishing of those of most pronounced views.*

* *Notes and Gleanings*, I, 148.

He was by no means satisfied with his Exeter appointment, whose income, he declared, was only £500 (£3,333); and though the renewing of leases brought him in a very large sum—said to amount to £20,000 (£133,333)—he very soon petitioned for a more lucrative berth, the see of Winchester being his special desire. He pressed his claim on the ground of his having been the anonymous author of the *Eikon Basilike*, whose origin had hitherto been kept secret. Winchester, however, was given to Morley of Worcester; but his vacated bishopric was offered to Gauden, who, though deeply disappointed, had to content himself with that. As for the authorship of the *Eikon*, his claim was generally, though not universally, accepted at that time, and for generations a controversy about it has been carried on, which, though never conclusive, has mostly been in his favour.

The Exeter diocese saw but little of its Bishop, for his government of the see was limited to a year and a half, and even of that short time he spent only six months in the west. His will, which is rather over-loaded with pious expressions concerning his own belief and hopes, contains no reference to his Exeter diocese, though he completed it only three months after his translation, and just before his death.*

The Act of Uniformity of 1662 made the newly revised *Book of Common Prayer* the only legal form of service in England, and obliged all ministers to take it into exclusive use on August 24th of that year, to repudiate the Solemn League and Covenant, and to declare it unlawful to take up arms against the King. As for those who had not been episcopally ordained, they must seek ordination from a bishop before that date, or must retire from the ministry. The great majority either were already qualified, or now submitted to these requirements; but that new "Black St Bartholomew's Day" was marked by the exodus of about 1,400 Presbyterian and Independent divines, the number being swelled to a total of some 2,000 by the inclusion of many who had had to give place to the rightful incumbents, or who had already vacated their benefices in order to avoid

* *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, XXI, 69; Oliver's *Bishops*, 149; Wills, P.C.C., Juxon, 26.

legal proceedings. From this it is manifest that the sufferers under the later legislation were much fewer than those of the previous persecution, the number of ministers who retired or were deprived in 1660-2 being less than two-fifths of the number ejected in and after 1642. The two cases, however, are not on a par, for the earlier victims were in every way the rightful incumbents, whereas it could not but be generally recognised that the later action was in most instances only the ousting of intruders.*

Writing forty years later his *Abridgment of Mr Baxter's History of his Life and Times*, Edmund Calamy appended to it *An account of many others of those worthy Ministers who were ejected after the Restoration of King Charles the Second*, which contains a list of those who were deprived. According to him 132 incumbents, curates, and lecturers were turned out in Devon, and 46 in Cornwall. Consequently it appears that, compared with the rest of England, Devon and Cornwall were affected more extensively in the later period than in the earlier; from which we infer that nonconforming ministers had been able to establish themselves in the west more generally than elsewhere; or, in other words, that Puritanism had become more paramount in the Exeter diocese than in other parts.

Among the ejected were several men of note:—George Hughes of St Andrew's, Plymouth, was "an eminent Divine, reckon'd the Apostle of the West"; Thomas Ford of Exeter had been Rector of St Faith's in London and a member of the Assembly of Divines; and John How of Torrington and Dr George Kendal of Kenton were well known as theological writers. Many of the deprived ministers founded dissenting bodies in their own parishes, such as William Bartlett at Bideford; and another was Thomas Larkham of Tavistock, a man of culture, and author of *Lectures on the Attributes* and other religious works, whose body was granted burial in the chancel of his old church. At Colyton the first minister of the separatists was the ejected vicar, John Wilkins, who was soon succeeded by John Gill, formerly Vicar of Shute,

* *Sufferings of the Clergy, epitomised*, 312; *Baxter's History*, Calamy, 487.

and he by John Kerridge, a deprived schoolmaster of Lyme Regis. There were others, who ministered elsewhere; such as Bartholomew Yeo, Rector of Huish, who established a Presbyterian meeting at Hatherleigh; Edward Hunt, Rector of Dunchideock, who founded a conventicle at South Molton; and Robert Gaylard, Curate of Ide, who settled at Exeter. Some of these were numbered among the thirteen ministers of Devon who sent a futile petition to Charles II, praying "that all things which are indifferent in themselves but are likely to foment differences among your Majesty's subjects may be laid aside in this juncture, wherein the spirits of men are too apt to be enkindled into too great a flame by the smallest spark"' *

A great mathematician, who made astronomy his speciality, and a great Church official also, Seth Ward might well be a cause of pride to his Cambridge College, which was Sidney Sussex; to Oxford, his adopted University; and to the diocese of Exeter, where he ruled as Dean for six months and then as Bishop for five years. His loyalty to Church principles lost him his fellowship at Cambridge; but as Savilian Professor of Astronomy at Oxford during the Commonwealth period he did valuable original work, and also became a preacher of note. Meanwhile he acted as chaplain to Bishop Brownrigg in his retirement at Sonning in Berkshire, and from him received the honourable, but at the time purely honorary, appointment of Precentor of Exeter Cathedral. This gave him a connection with the west, and at the Restoration he received further preferment as Rector of Uploman, Prebendary of Exeter, and, a year later, Dean of Exeter. In that office he displayed admirable energy, and was successful in regaining for Church people the use of the whole of the Cathedral, although the Puritans had petitioned the King for leave to retain one half for their own worship. He was not satisfied with demolishing the "monstrous Babylonish wall" in order to open up all the interior, but he further undertook an extensive scheme for restoring and beautifying the edifice, on which he expended

* *Abbots of Tavistock*, 293, 297, 348; *Colytonia*; *Devon Notes and Queries*, II, 151; VI, 48.

the large sum of £25,000 (£166,666). He also erected on the choir screen, in place of the one destroyed by the Puritans, a new organ by John Loosemore at the cost of £2,000 (£13,333). The men of that generation accounted it to be the best in England, and parts of it have lasted to this day, though it has been considerably enlarged from time to time, especially in 1891, when it was entirely rebuilt by Messrs Willis and Son. The cloisters, too, he purged from their desecration, putting an end to the traffic in serges, and clearing away the business premises that had been erected there.

Ward's promotion to the bishopric, consequent on the translation of Gauden to Worcester, was a graceful recognition of his devotion to the Cathedral, and as Bishop he displayed the same vigorous and able administration as when he was Dean. He restored the palace, and re-converted it into an episcopal residence; he took special pains to find out the amounts of the stipends of his clergy, and effected the augmentation of the poorer benefices; and while confirming the reduction of the canons to nine, he raised the emoluments of the fifteen prebendaries from £4 (£26) to £20 (£132) a year. That was a time when but few new churches were built in England, but he had the opportunity of consecrating two in September 1665, both of them dedicated under the name of King Charles the Martyr, one being at Falmouth and the other (founded twenty-four years before) at Plymouth. The Bishop wrote to the Primate concerning the former church, and declared that the dedication was chosen "out of the honour which every true son of the Church owes to his memory (the only person canonized for a martyr by it)."* In the outside world he came forward prominently in 1663 as the chief advocate, with Archbishop Sheldon, of the Five Mile Act; which was to operate against nonconformist ministers, who should refuse to take an oath that they would not "at any time endeavour any alteration of government either in Church or State."†

When he became Bishop, the Church was already making

* W. H. Hutton's *History*, 194; *Devon Notes and Queries*, VI, 200; *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, LIX, 336; Oliver's *Bishops*, 151.

† W. H. Hutton's *History*, 204; G. G. Perry, II, 508.

a good recovery from the time of her humiliation; though in his Visitation Articles of 1662 he still found it necessary to enquire whether any persons "sit, lean, or lay their hats upon the Communion-Table," and whether minstrels, morris-dancers, dogs, hawks, or hounds are permitted to be brought or come into the church to the disturbance of the congregation. But little could be required by way of ritual—only surplice and hood were ordered to be worn—though in other respects much efficiency was enforced, or at least expected. The provision of two services daily was taken for granted; all persons were to attend their parish church on every Sunday and Holy Day, and to remain for the whole service; and any absentees were to be delated to a Justice of the Peace, and fined a shilling for each default. A sermon was to be preached every Sunday, or, failing that, a homily read; and there must be no neglect of the Ember-days or of the Rogationtide perambulation; but anything of the nature of a cottage service was forbidden, whether conducted by a minister or by a layman. Easter offerings were to be paid regularly; there must be no strife or contention concerning pews or seats in the Church; and all schoolmasters, surgeons, physicians, and midwives must be licensed by the Bishop before they could be allowed to act. Finally, close investigation was made concerning the conduct of the minister, and it was further asked:—"Doth he wear his hair of an immoderate or uncomely length? Is his apparel grave and decent, both for fashion and colour?" We pity the churchwardens and sidesmen, whose task would appear to have been great indeed; for they had to take an oath "to present every person that now is, or of late was, inhabiting within your parish, that has done any offence, or omitted any duty mentioned in this book now given you in charge." Of course, Confirmation had for long years been a neglected rite; so it is not surprising to learn that in his first year Bishop Ward confirmed many thousands of all ages.

We wonder whether this prelate carried away happy memories of his Exeter days, when in 1667 he was translated to Salisbury. Certainly he left no evidences of affectionate remembrance in his will, which he composed near the close

of his life; for there is no mention of Exeter, though he bequeathed £1,000 (£6,168) to Salisbury Cathedral and various legacies to institutions in that city, besides £20 (£123) for the poor of Buntingford in Hertfordshire, where he was born, and £20 to Aspenden, in whose church he was baptized; nor did he include any Exeter dignitaries with the Deans of Canterbury, St Paul's, and Peterborough, to whom he left memorial rings. Perhaps it was only lapse of time that made it seem natural to him to pass over his old diocese, for nearly twenty years had passed since he bade it farewell. Certainly it was not due to family needs, as he had no nearer relations than a sister and some nephews; for it is recorded of him that in his younger days, when he was poor, he would not marry, lest it should be in the power of a woman to say that "she had made him a man, and that without her he would not have been worth a groat"; and when he was a bishop, and plenty of opportunities offered, he gave it as his opinion that it was "unlawful and indecent for a prelate to marry." Be that as it may, Ward was one of the ablest and best bishops of his time, and his removal to Salisbury while yet in the prime of life—he was only fifty—was a very real loss to the Exeter diocese.*

The next bishop, Anthony Sparrow, was a strong Churchman, a learned liturgiologist, and a Greek and Hebrew scholar; and, at the time that he was elevated to the bench (1667), he was Archdeacon of Sudbury in his native Suffolk, and President of his own College—Queen's at Cambridge. He was thus a man of parts and position, and he had been a sufferer for his loyalty to his principles, being ejected from his fellowship by the Puritans, and deprived of his benefice of Hawkedon near Bury St Edmund's for his public use of the *Book of Common Prayer*. His most valuable publication was *A Rationale upon the Book of Common Prayer*, and others were *A Collection of Articles, Injunctions, Canons of the Church of England*, and *Notes on the Office for the Visitation of the Sick*.

There is but little recorded concerning his episcopate at Exeter. It is true that his Visitation Articles of 1674 have been preserved, but they are merely a reprint, almost

* *Life of Seth Ward*, 84.

verbatim, of those of Bishop Ward. However, conditions had changed since then, for he no longer finds it necessary to enquire whether incumbents have been "episcopally ordained, according to the laws of the Church of England," or to ascertain that they have been legally instituted as well as inducted. Apparently, he counts the use of a surplice alone to be sufficient, for he drops the question as to whether the minister wears also "such other scholastical habit as is suitable to his degree"; nor does he reproduce the inquisitorial interrogation about the length of the incumbent's hair. Furthermore, he is not so exacting as his predecessor with regard to the functions of churchwardens, being satisfied with merely requiring them to swear "to the best of your skill and knowledge to present such things and persons as to your knowledge are presentable by the laws ecclesiastical of this Realm."

We are given an interesting insight into the service arrangements of the Cathedral, as they appeared to a foreigner and Roman Catholic of that period, a visit to England by Cosmo III, Grand Duke of Tuscany, who landed at Plymouth and travelled through Devonshire *en route* to London, having been described in some detail by his companion, Count L. Megalotti, in 1669. A Sunday was spent in Exeter, and, we are told, "his highness went to the Cathedral church at the hour of prayer, about nine o'clock. . . . . The bishop was seated in a marble tabernacle" (he must mean a wooden throne) "on the Epistle-side, on a seat covered with red cloth, dressed in the habit which was used by the Catholic bishops of the kingdom before the apostacy, namely, a surplice over a black vest, and a mantle of the same colour; on his head he wore a small cap, similar to that of the Roman pontiffs, without any other ornament; and before him, on the edge of the tabernacle, over which was extended a large canopy of red cloth, was placed a cushion, and on that the book; and under the tabernacle, on a level with the floor of the church, in an enclosure of wood, stood the wife of the bishop, and his children, no less than nine in number. In the prebendal stalls sat, according to their rank, the dignitaries and canons in their canonical habits, *i.e.*, a surplice, and a

mantle of black silk, differing in shape from that of the bishop, as being narrower both before and behind. These, in conjunction with other regular choristers, sang the psalms in the English language, in a chant similar to the Gregorian, making their pauses to the sound of the organ, which has been erected lately on the wall separating the choir from the rest of the church, and is of a most exquisite tone." He learned that the revenue of the see, which had formerly amounted to £5,000, had fallen to £500 as a consequence of the Cromwellian alienations; but, owing to the falling in of leases, it had risen recently to £800 (£5,151), and was likely to improve further. "The music of this church," he continues, "is reckoned amongst the best in the kingdom, owing to the good stipends which the chapter is enabled to give in consequence of its excellent revenues, which are entirely distinct from those of the bishop. . . . . On the altar table is laid a covering of red velvet, which, extending itself on each side, falls in front down to the ground; and over this is spread a table cloth. On one side of the table is a large cushion of velvet of the same colour; and this supports a silver basin and chalice. There are likewise two vessels for preserving the wine which they make use of at the Lord's Supper, and two candlesticks of brass. On the Gospel-side stands the ancient seat of the bishop."*

In accordance with the practice that was prevalent at that period, Bishop Sparrow was moved on to another and more lucrative see; and, having served for nine years at Exeter, he spent a similar time at Norwich, dying there at the age of seventy-three. By his will, made on his deathbed, he left £10 (£60) to the poor of his old home parish at Depden in Suffolk, and £100 (£600) to his College at Cambridge, besides £100 for the rebuilding of St Paul's Cathedral.†

It is fortunate for the reputation of Christianity that Thomas Lamplugh did not live in the age of persecution, for there was not in him the martyr spirit, and he was not ready to "suffer for the truth's sake." However, we may

* *Early Tours*, 105, 108.

† *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, LIII, 313; Oliver's *Bishops*, 154; *Visitation Articles of Bp. Sparrow*; Wills, P.C.C., Cann, 75.

perhaps admire his skilful diplomacy, which was exemplified most signally by his success in rising in royal favour, even after he had demeaned himself by signing the Solemn League and Covenant in order that he might retain his fellowship in Queen's College at Oxford. His posing as an ardent royalist at the Restoration gained for him many preferments, among them being the principalship of St Alban's Hall, the archdeaconry of London, the vicariate of St Martin's-in-the-Fields, and the deanery of Rochester, from which he was promoted to the bishopric of Exeter (1676-1688). Here he seems to have figured more favourably than at any other time in his career. He dispensed a generous hospitality, especially to his clergy; and one of them, when preaching in the Cathedral, was able to laud him for his regularity in attending daily three services there, and also for his zeal in promoting the restoration of churches and in replacing the monuments of his predecessors that had been removed in the troublous times. He showed wisdom, too, in his considerate treatment of nonconforming clergymen, refraining from attempting any harsh measures, but rather trying to win them over by persuasion and exhorting them to study Hooker's *Ecclesiastical Polity*.

This policy, however, he was not always able to pursue—notably in 1683, when the Mayor and Corporation of Exeter issued orders that nonconformist ministers were to be proceeded against in accordance with the recent legislation against dissenters, punishment being also threatened against all who assembled in conventicles. This the Bishop endorsed by his mandate to the clergy :—" We require all the Ministers within the Precincts of this City deliberately to publish this excellent Order of theirs (made the last Quarter Sessions) the very next Lord's day after it shall be tendered to them." That Order included also an effort to improve church-going, for the constables were to report the names of all over sixteen years of age who did not go to their parish church every Sunday, and " there abide orderly and soberly during the whole time of Divine service " ; and the churchwardens and the constables were further to present all who absented themselves from their church for a month, or who had not

received the Holy Communion within the last year. Evidently attendance at the altar had been very slack, for their Worships remark that "many have not received the Holy Sacrament, according to the constitution of our Church, since its happy re-establishment"; but to us there seems to be a revolting degradation of the sacred rite in the command that no one was to be licensed to keep an ale-house, unless he could bring a certificate from his minister that he had received the Holy Communion once at least in the year past.

Lamplugh was quite decided in his own mind—and even declared it to his brother-bishops—that it would be impolitic for his interests to range himself openly with the Seven Bishops in opposition to James II. He went so far, indeed, as to affix his name with "approbo" to the rough draft of their petition; but, declaring to his brethren, "I will be safe," he refused to put his signature to the final document, and so missed the glory of being numbered with the famous Seven. His diplomacy even induced him to conceal his own convictions and to ordain that the royal Declaration should be read in the churches of his diocese. When William of Orange landed at Brixham in Torbay, having exhorted his clergy and laity to remain faithful in their allegiance to their lawful sovereign, he retired from Exeter and betook himself by coach to London to King James, who thereupon rewarded his devotion by translating him to the vacant see of York. Being now seventy years of age, his appointment would seem to be not advantageous for the diocese; but Lamplugh would certainly be delighted with the honour, especially as he was a Yorkshireman by birth, so that we may question the veracity of the epitaph beneath his full-length mitred effigy in York Minster, which declares that, "Anno 1676 Episcopus Exoniensis consecratus. Tandem (licet dignitatem multum deprecatus) in sedem hanc Metropoliticam evectus est anno 1688."

It was but a chilly reception that was accorded to William of Orange, when he reached Exeter on November 9th, 1688. The civic authorities, who at first had shut the gates against his *avant-couriers*, though they allowed him to enter, refused to receive him in state, and there was no welcome from the

ecclesiastics. Dean Annesley (Lord Altham) had retired, as well as the Bishop, and the Prince took up his lodging in his house, and after a meal entered the Cathedral in military state for a thanksgiving service, which was conducted by his chaplain, Dr Gilbert Burnet, afterwards Bishop of Salisbury. William occupied the episcopal throne—so little appreciation had he of Church customs—but the canons would not take their stalls ; and when Dr Burnet began to read the Prince's declaration, the Cathedral staff showed their disapproval by trooping out from the choir. After a sojourn of eleven days, during which the Dean returned, he left Exeter and made his progress to London ; and one of the first to swear allegiance to him as King of England was Archbishop Lamplugh, who also assisted at his coronation.*

Lamplugh was succeeded at Exeter by another successful time-server, who had climbed high, and was to climb higher still, by his exercise of the wisdom of this world. In one respect indeed he was suitably placed, for his family was an honourable one in the diocese—they claimed descent from a long line of Cornish ancestors, settled at Trelawne in Altarnun before the Conquest, and a baronetcy had been bestowed on the Bishop's grandfather for his loyalty to the cause of Charles I. So the third baronet, Sir Jonathan Trelawny, was right glad to be translated from Bristol to Exeter ; for while the former see was poor, the latter was better endowed, and he was not withheld by any scruples from begging for promotion. It was nothing unusual at that period, but to us it is offensive to read such a letter as one addressed by him to Lord Treasurer Rochester in 1685, asking him to bring about his appointment to Exeter rather than to Bristol, on the ground that the stipend of the latter would not be sufficient to enable him to pay off the debts left by his father. Still more objectionable was a letter from him to Lord President the Earl of Sunderland in 1686, telling him how, when he was on Visitation in Dorset, he had reprimanded a clergyman who had preached on the danger of popery, and had threatened suspension to any preachers

* *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, XXXII, 31 ; *Trans. of Devon. Assoc.*, XIII, 178.

who should presume to condemn the King's religion; and, further, how at Cerne, when twelve persons were delated as Roman Catholics, and the Chancellor wished to know how to proceed, he had given orders that they were to be let off. To this he added a complaint as to the smallness of his income, and declared that he would be able to serve his Majesty more fully, "whenever the King's grace, or your lordship's favour, shall place me in a dignitary of larger value and extent." *

However, Trelawny, while Bishop of Bristol, earned for himself undying fame by his resistance to the two royal Declarations of Indulgence, and he was a leader among the seven bishops who laid their remonstrance before James II at Whitehall and were afterwards committed to the Tower. The verdict of "not guilty," which acquitted them of the charge of seditious libel, invested them with a halo of national popularity, though the well known ballad of "Shall Trelawny die?" has long been known to have been composed by the Reverend Robert Stephen Hawker of Morwenstow, and not, as at one time was generally believed, to be a contemporary heroic. One of James's last acts as King of England was to attempt to conciliate Trelawny by the offer of the see of Exeter, but the aspiring prelate had to wait for the confirmation of his nomination till after the coronation of William and Mary; and we may well believe that, while five of the famous Seven Bishops suffered deprivation as Nonjurors, Trelawny felt no hesitation in transferring his allegiance from James to William of Orange.

The Revolution of 1688 was disastrous to the Church, in that it deprived the Establishment of the services of a considerable number of the ablest and best of its members, both clerical and lay—though the latter were comparatively few—for their consciences would not allow them to set aside their oath of allegiance to James II and his lawful successors. Out of nineteen bishops as many as nine refused the new oath, and, though three of these died soon after, the other six suffered deprivation when the statute took effect on February 1st, 1690, Archbishop Sancroft and Bishop Ken being

* *Trelawny Papers*, 14.

of the number. The names of about 550 other clergymen have been preserved, sixteen of whom belonged to the diocese of Exeter, almost all of them being Devonians. It is surprising to find so few figuring as Nonjurors in these two counties, especially when we call to mind how devoted the western men, especially the Cornish, had been to the cause of Charles I less than half a century before. Probably the influence and example of Bishop Trelawny weighed with many in making their decision.

Most prominent among these sixteen was Henry Gandy, one of the ablest controversialist writers of the Nonjuring party, and a man of mark at Oxford, where he was a Fellow of Oriel and Senior Proctor, while at Exeter he held the benefice of St Leonard's, which was at that period only a small cure. After his deprivation he settled in London, and succeeded Hickes as minister of the Oratory in Scroop's Court, near St Andrew's Church in Holborn, where he was afterwards consecrated to carry on the episcopal succession, and where he himself held several Consecrations and Ordinations. He was a leading writer on the side of the Nonusagers, and survived as a loyal and staunch churchman till 1734. Another Oxonian of note for his learning was Thomas Crosthwaite, who was a Fellow of Queen's and Principal of St Edmund's Hall, and held a prebendal stall in Exeter Cathedral. William Sclater, Vicar of Brampford Speke, did valuable work as a defender of the Church against Presbyterian views, being the anonymous author of *The original draught of the Primitive Church by a Presbyter of the Church of England.* But the diocese had most reason to be proud of Abednego Seller, who was born at Plymouth, and, after holding for a few years the rectory of Combe-in-Teignhead, became Vicar of Charles' Church in his native town. After his ejection he, like so many other Nonjurors, took up his residence in London; though, unlike most of his fellows, he was not reduced to poverty, but was able to bequeath valuable books to the Bodleian Library. His pen was active in the Nonjuring interest; but most precious were his devotional publications, especially his *Devout Communicant,* which was so much in request as to run into

a seventh and enlarged edition. Other Nonjurors of the diocese were Canon Thomas, Prebendary Thomas Long, senior, Prebendary Thomas Long, junior (Rector of Whimple), Charles Hutton (Rector of Uplyme), Robert Manly (Rector of Powderham), Edmund Ellys (Rector of East Allington), Lewis Southcomb (Rector of Roseash), Bartholomew Parr, Matthew Nicholls (Curate of Eggesford), an unnamed Curate of Tiverton, Thomas Polwhele (Vicar of Newlyn), and James Beaufort (Vicar of Lanteglos by Camelford).*

A legal case, which cropped up in 1690, led to important results, inasmuch as it called forth a finally authoritative ruling concerning the right of a bishop to act as sole and independent judge of the intellectual fitness of a presentee to a benefice. On the death of the Rector of South Pool, Sampson Hele, Esq., the patron, nominated the Reverend Francis Hodder, who, besides being a poor man with a large family, as Vicar of Ugborough had much heavier work and a stipend of only £30 (£174). The Bishop refused to institute, on the ground that, after examination, he found him to be unfitted to hold the living because of his want of learning ("in literatura minus sufficiens seu capax"). He therefore called on Hele to present another clergyman; and as he did not do so, the Bishop, after the statutory interval, collated the Reverend Gawen Hayman. Hele then appealed to the Law, and got decisions in his favour in the Court of Common Pleas and the Court of King's Bench, it being held that the reason alleged by the Bishop for his refusal to institute was too indefinite. Trelawny, however, was able to produce ample proof of Hodder's gross ignorance of Latin and Greek, and also to show that, though afterwards validly ordained, he had forged his Letters of Priest's Orders as from a former Bishop of Bristol, the fraud being discovered by Bishop Sparrow, who had noticed the badness of the latinity. Consequently, on appeal the House of Lords reversed the judgments of the inferior Courts, the Bishop being admitted to have absolute power in such a matter.†

* *Life of J. Kettlewell*, II, appendix, p. vii; *Nonjurors*, Overton, 135, 147, 178, 219, 390, 404, 471.

† *Case of Hele v. Bp. Trelawny*; and *Case of Bp. Trelawny v. Hayman and Hele.*

The episcopate of Trelawny marked the height of the quarrels between the two Houses of the Convocation of Canterbury, which met in 1701 after an enforced silence of eleven years. The main bone of contention was the topic of the independence of the Lower House, as evidenced especially in the question as to whether their Prolocutor had the right to prorogue them, or whether they were subject in this respect to the Archbishop's dictate. Sir Bartholomew Shower's *Letter to a Convocation Man* had increased the bitterness of feeling; and during the first years of the new century the strife waxed hot between the Bishops, most of whom were Whigs and many of latitudinarian views, and the rank and file of the clergy, who were mostly in sympathy with High Church doctrines and Jacobite principles.

In the Exeter diocese these feelings found expression in a couple of broadsheets, published early in 1705, when elections had to be held for the return of Proctors to a fresh Convocation. It seems that for some considerable time the bishops, in Exeter and also in other dioceses, had been wont to interfere in such elections, even to the extent of nominating or recommending candidates, and the clergy had weakly acquiesced. Now, however, when Bishop Trelawny in troubled times attempted the same thing—in an aggravated form—he was met with opposition. A Mr Fisher had already been returned at three successive elections, and had on those occasions had the Bishop's support; but for the new election his Lordship recommended Dr Hickes, an outsider who had not long been in the diocese. As the other candidate he put forward Mr Hoblyn, a Cornishman but little known to the Exeter clergy, who wished for Mr Newte, as having been born and bred in the diocese, and worked well and zealously therein for thirty years. When the clergy showed signs of opposing his policy, the Bishop bitterly resented it; and he made his wishes the subject of three letters addressed to his diocese, even incorporating his expressed will in a Visitation charge, and instructing his Surrogate in a speech at the Visitation to insist on compliance. He went so far, too, as to demean himself by indulging in rather coarse abuse of Mr Fisher. An anonymous writer, therefore, issued to

the clergy of the diocese a four-paged pamphlet, entitled, *Reasons in particular why the Clergy of the Archdeaconry of Exon cannot comply with His Lordship's present Recommendation of Proctors to represent them in the ensuing Convocation.* He pointed out that the clergy, who greatly appreciated the Bishop's work as Diocesan, had always been most conformable to his wishes ; but that to consent, as they had done, to his and his predecessors' recommendations of candidates for the proctorship was dangerous to their rights and liberties. If such a precedent were firmly established, they might lose their constitutional and undeniable right of free selection and election. And as for Mr Fisher, he had before been returned by the unanimous vote of the clergy, and had served faithfully, so that no one had even thought of casting him adrift, which indeed would amount to a mark of censure.

A second broadsheet followed very soon after, which declared itself to be *An Apology for the Clergy of the Diocese of Exon, endeavouring to choose their own Proctors to represent them in the ensuing Convocation.* This also was anonymous, and the similarity of its line of argument with that of the former is suggestive of identity of origin. It added a kind of threat, to the effect that, if the clergy are to obey the episcopal bidding in this matter, Parliament will have to be appealed to to forbid bishops from intermeddling in the free election of proctors for Convocation, even as peers are debarred from interfering in elections of Members of Parliament. These protests were very timely ; but the good that they effected was much circumscribed by State tyranny, which again obstructed the Convocation's deliberations for a while, and finally, in 1717, entirely stopped its assembling for the transaction of business—a ban that was not removed till 135 years had elapsed.

About the close of the seventeenth century and the opening years of the eighteenth, there was much searching of heart concerning the introduction of organs into churches. Few, if any, had survived the Puritan tyranny of the Commonwealth period ; and so strong was the feeling against them, as being superstitious and popish, that responsible persons were deterred from replacing those that had been

destroyed. In 1696, however, the example set by Exeter Cathedral thirty years before was followed by Tiverton, where an organ, paid for by subscription with some help from Church funds, was erected on the screen in St Peter's Church. At its inauguration a sermon was preached by Rector John Newte on the text, "Praise Him with stringed instruments and organs" (Psalm CL, 4); and he afterwards published his disquisition under the title of *A Sermon concerning the lawfulness of use of organs in Christian Churches.* The event aroused considerable controversy, opponents objecting to organs as being popish, or as belonging to Judaic ceremonial; and they even argued that, if organ music was sanctioned, it would be illogical to forbid dancing in church. The objections were easily refuted by Mr Newte, and by the Reverend Henry Dodwell in a treatise entitled *The lawfulness of instrumental music in holy offices.* The first criticism was met by citing the usages of the Reformed Churches abroad; for the second they referred to the evidence of antiquity; while to the third the surprising reply was made, "Why not? Where would be the absurdity, if now in some solemnities a grave, sober, and religious dance was allowed by good authority?" Newte clinched his arguments by declaring:—"I heartily wish when the expense of this war is over that other parishes would follow so good an example. I verily believe that since the late erection of the organ in our parish Church, Tiverton, and much by means of it, we have as regular and decent, and, I hope, as devoted a congregation as any in the whole diocese. And for Psalmody may be bold to say, much beyond any that I have been informed of." *

Those were the days when Parish Clerks held almost supreme rule over the Church music—at least in those places where there was no organ; and the *Episcopal Registers* of the period have many entries stating that this or that Bishop of Exeter confirmed the appointment of a Parish Clerk, whose designation in Latin was "aquaebajulus," or "water-bearer," one of his functions in former times being to carry

* *English Church*, Abbey and Overton, 458; *Ch. of St Peter, Tiverton*, 65.

the holy-water vessel. He would announce the psalm—often selected by himself—and either sing it solo, or lead the congregation, maybe reading the psalm line by line (in the metrical version of Sternhold and Hopkins, or the new one by Tate and Brady), as Bishop Gibson specially ordered in his Lincoln diocese. Unedifying and undevotional must have been the performance in many a church, and the limit would be reached when the Clerk presumed to display his own poetic powers, as at Epworth. Here is John Wesley's reminiscence :—" One Sunday, immediately after sermon, my father's clerk said with an audible voice : ' Let us sing to the praise, etc., an hymn of my own composing—

King William is come home, come home !
King William home is come !
Therefore let us together sing
The hymn that's called Te D'um.' "

We can well understand the marked increase of congrega tions in those churches that possessed themselves of organs as a result of the High Church movement in the time of Queen Anne. And, if Tavistock had had an organ in 1700, there would have been no scope for the unseemly altercation between Vicar John Rennell and his congregation concerning psalm-singing, which Bishop Trelawny endeavoured—not very successfully—to allay by summoning vicar, church-wardens, and others to Trelawne, and selecting for their use a certain number of psalms and tunes.*

There seems to have been a good deal of church-going at this epoch, and as a quite independent witness we may cite Miss Celia Fiennes, a lady of good birth and ample means, who made a tour through Devon and Cornwall in 1695, and wrote a somewhat full account of her experiences and observations in her journal, published under the title, *Through England on a side saddle.* Her descriptions are deeply interesting, and appear to be reliable and veracious—save only when she credulously accepted a yarn about a marvellous bird to be found on Lundy Island (a place that, she

* *Episcopal Registers; English Church*, Abbey and Overton, 458 ; John Wesley's *Works*, X, 445 ; *Abbots of Tavistock*, 315.

confesses, she did not visit) :—" a bird that lives partly in the water and partly out, and so may be called an amphibious creature ; it is true that one foot is like a turkey, the other a goose's foot ; it lays its egg in a place the sun shines on, and sets it so exactly upright on the small end that there it remains till taken up, and all the art and skill of persons cannot set it up so again to abide." However, she took special and careful note of ecclesiastical matters, and appears to have been a religiously minded lady ; so her remarks are worthy of attention. She found that in most of the market towns in the two counties the churches were very well attended, and she specially mentions Truro and Penzance, and also Cullompton with its congregation of four or five hundred—" though they were but of the meaner sort." In St Andrew's Church at Plymouth she noticed, besides a full length portrait of Charles I, the position of the altar—not set against the east wall, but brought forward, and placed with its long sides facing north and south. She discovered that that town had four meeting-houses, quakers and anabaptists possessing two of them. Honiton, too, had " a very large meeting of dissenters " ; while Ashburton contained " a great many dissenters, and those the most considerable persons of the town ; there was a presbyterian, an anabaptist, and a quakers' meeting.*

The spiritual and ecclesiastical standard of the episcopate was not high at this period, especially after it had been impoverished in 1690 by the loss of those whose principles induced them to sacrifice their positions at the bidding of conscience ; and Bishop Trelawny was no exception to this general statement, though his ecclesiastical efficiency was more noticeable than his spiritual power. He allowed considerably more than a year to elapse after his confirmation, before he left London for his new diocese ; but after that he spent most of the ensuing ten years in the west, having ranged himself with Anne and the Churchills in their opposition to the King, which necessitated his absenting himself from Court. During that time he held episcopal Visitations, and resided much at Trelawne, his family seat in the parish of

* *Early Tours*, 111, 116, 117, 120, 129, 131, 136.

Pelynt, whose chapel he rebuilt. At the beginning of the new century he returned again into the arena of public life, and came forward as a supporter of Atterbury in his defence of the independent rights of the Lower House of Convocation—now again permitted to sit, after eleven years' repression by Archbishops Tillotson and Tenison and the Whig Government. He thus posed as a friend of the parochial clergy, and set himself in opposition to the autocratic policy that was followed by the majority of the bishops in Convocation. As a steadfast adherent of the Tory party, and one who voted with the minority for the Bill against Occasional Conformity in 1703, he enjoyed popularity with the main body of his clergy—a popularity that was enhanced by his reputation for being open-hearted, generous, and charitable.*

Shortly after her accession Queen Anne evidenced her appreciation of Bishop Trelawny's support by appointing him to preach in St Paul's Cathedral at the great thanksgiving service for the recent successes in the Low Countries and at Vigo; and in 1707 he was honoured by being translated to Winchester—a promotion that was viewed unfavourably by many, especially by Bishop Burnet of Salisbury, who declared that his merits consisted only in his family connection and in his political influence in Cornwall.† It is significant that he commenced his Primary Charge to the clergy of his new diocese by stating that it had "pleas'd our Good God and Gracious Queen to bring me to this See from that of Exon through all the bitterest opposition which envenom'd and consecrated lyes could throw in my way." Perhaps some deduction has to be made from his eulogy in that Charge, where his object was to encourage his clergy to emulate the virtues of those of his former diocese; but even so, Bishop Trelawny's appreciation, when addressing his new diocese, is a beautiful testimony to the excellence of those whom he had ruled over for so long a time:—"He trusted that he might find a clergy of as deserved honour and estimation as he left in the diocese of Exeter for learning,

* Abbey's *English Church*, I, 21, 128.
Dic. of Nat. Biog., LVII, 179.

piety, incessant pains, exemplary lives, wholesome and instructive doctrine."*

Ofspring Blackall's strictly religious life and strong Church principles appealed to Queen Anne ; so that she flouted Whig objections, and on the recommendation of the trusty and trusted Archbishop Sharp appointed him to the see of Exeter. A Londoner by birth and incumbency, he had been one of the chaplains of William III, but had nevertheless cherished sympathies with the Stuarts and the Nonjurors, and was therefore looked at askance by the dominant party. Later he had come forward prominently as a defender of orthodox opinions concerning revealed religion in opposition to John Toland and Benjamin Hoadly, and he was their principal antagonist in a pamphlet warfare that lasted for a number of years. But he was still more famous as a preacher ; and not only was he exceedingly popular in the pulpit, but his sermons were of a solid and yet simple character, that was calculated to have lasting effect as a teaching power, especially a series of eighty-seven on the Sermon on the Mount. His preaching would carry all the more weight, because his character was so admirable, the summary of his intimate friend Sir William Dawes, Archbishop of York, being to this effect :—" I never met with a more perfect pattern of a true Christian life in all its parts " ; and he comments especially on " his primitive simplicity and integrity, his constant evenness of mind, and his unaffected and yet most ardent piety towards God." The English bishops of Queen Anne's reign were an admirable body of men, who were generally and deservedly esteemed by the nation, and Blackall was a favourable example of his class. It was a pleasing tribute to the public recognition of his worth that he was twice appointed a Deputy Lieutenant for the city of Exeter. Alas ! that a fall from his horse deprived the diocese of so saintly a leader after an episcopate of only eight years (1708-1716).†

The sweet humility of the man is manifest in his will, which reveals self-effacement and a dislike of worldly pomp.

* *Sermon and Charge*, 38.

† *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, V, 117 ; Oliver's *Bishops*, 160 ; Abbey's *English Church*, I, 153, 178.

He desires "a decent but very private burial, and without a funeral sermon, in the place where I shall happen to die; neither would I have a stone with an inscription over my grave, nor any monument erected to my memory." We learn incidentally that he had been wont to give generously in charity; and also that he had invested his savings in State lotteries, to the amount of several hundreds of pounds, and had £2,300 in South Sea Stock—a poor fortune for his seven children who were to inherit his estate.*

As Bishop of Exeter his chief public work was his advocacy of charity schools for the city, a cause which he pressed home in a sermon before the Mayor and Corporation, and in a pastoral addressed to his clergy. But further, Bishop Blackall lived in a period in which education was coming much to the fore, and all over the diocese schools were springing into existence—a blessed advance that was due very largely to the splendid work of the newly founded "Society for promoting Christian Knowledge," whose foremost object was the educating of the poor. There were already in the diocese several Grammar Schools which even then might be regarded as ancient, such as those at Ashburton, Barnstaple, Exeter, Tavistock, Bideford, Ottery, Colyton, Crediton, Truro, Totnes, Plymouth, Tiverton, Honiton, and Braunton. It is not surprising to find others being now set up at such important places as Dartmouth, Exmouth, Kingsbridge, Modbury, Moreton Hampstead, Okehampton, South Molton, Teignmouth, Topsham, and Torrington in Devonshire; and at Falmouth, Fowey, Launceston, Liskeard, and St Austell in Cornwall. But it is a revelation to find how great was the number of Grammar Schools even in little country parishes, for early in that eighteenth century an education in grammar was available for Devonshire boys in small places such as Aylesbeare, Bickleigh, Bridgerule, Buckland Filleigh, Drewsteignton, Ipplepen, Kenton, and Shobrooke; and for Cornish lads at Looe, St Keverne, St Merryn, Saltash, and Tregony, while at St German's Latin and French were taught also.

Besides these, a host of elementary schools came into being about that time, and though their curriculum was

* Wills, P.C.C., Whitfield, 6.

generally limited to "the three R's," and not uncommonly was even less comprehensive, yet the system was spreading through the whole diocese; and even such small or remote parishes as Clyst Hydon, Cruwys Morchard, Kentisbury, Pyworthy, and Sampford Spiney had each its school, and across the Tamar—Morwenstow, Perranzabulo, Poundstock, and Tintagel. Populous places had more than one school, Exeter having several in addition to the Grammar School, which seems to have held a pre-eminent position in the diocese, being the only one described as a High School (alta schola).

We are able to glean some particulars about the teachers, for every man had to be licensed by the Bishop before he was permitted to teach, and generally each one's status is entered in the Episcopal Register. There we learn that a large number of these schoolmasters were university graduates, and that many were clergymen. It was no uncommon arrangement for an incumbent to be the teacher of his own village school, or for a curate to be licensed to parochial and scholastic work in the same place. Here was an important and beneficial undertaking, and well might Addison thus deliver himself, as he did just before the end of Blackall's episcopate:—"I have always looked on this institution of charity schools—which of late years has so universally prevailed through the whole nation—as the glory of the age we live in, and the most proper means that can be made use of to recover it out of its present degeneracy and depravation of manners. It seems to promise us an honest and virtuous posterity. There will be few in the next generation who will not at least be able to write and read, and have not had an early tincture of religion."*

A careful scrutiny of the ordination and institution lists is necessary, if we would learn the condition of the Church in the diocese as regards the clerical order. Such an investigation shows us that the half century comprised in the later Stuart and the Revolution period was a time of steady deterioration in almost every respect, except for a marked recovery in Blackall's closing episcopate; and the nature

* *Guardian*, No. 105.

of the statistics may be taken as an evidence of the influence and even of the character of the ruling prelate.

It was of course most reasonable that immediately after the Restoration many men, unable during the Commonwealth to secure Ordination, should crowd into Holy Orders; and in fact we find that in his first year Bishop Gauden admitted a record number of candidates, laying hands on as many as 70 deacons and 76 priests, so that the yearly average of his brief episcopate was respectively 48 and 52. These figures afterwards gradually and surely shrank during the episcopates of Ward, Sparrow, Lamplugh, and Trelawny, the decreases being very marked during the two last named, the numbers of the deacons averaging annually 28, 25, 18, and 13, and the priests 23, 24, 19, and 14, though under Blackall the numbers rose to 19 and 23. In one respect, however, there was an improvement; for, owing to the revival of activity of the Universities, more and more of the ordination candidates were graduates, the percentage of just under 50 in Gauden's and Ward's time being raised to 72 in Sparrow's, to 89 in Lamplugh's, and apparently even higher (the returns are incomplete) in Trelawny's. Of Blackall's ordinands 93 per cent. were graduates, and most of the remainder were University men. As with ordinations, so with institutions, it was natural that in Gauden's episcopate the number should be abnormally large, when so many nonconformist ministers had to give place to ordained priests; but his yearly average of 74, which was well maintained by Ward's 49, fell off to 30 under Sparrow, to 28 under Lamplugh, and to 25 under Trelawny—figures so small as to betoken a continuous condition of ecclesiastical stagnation. It is noticeable that all these five prelates were wont to disregard the prohibition of Canon xxxii, for it was quite usual for Gauden and Ward to make a man deacon and priest "both together upon one day"; it was done frequently by Sparrow; and also, though not so commonly, by Lamplugh and Trelawny; but the irregularity ceased with Blackall's accession.

Occasionally a bishop found it suited his convenience to hold an Ordination in London, but otherwise the first four of this group normally ordained in Exeter, Ward generally

in the Deanery (his former home), and the others in the Cathedral choir for the chief functions, and in the Lady Chapel or the Palace Chapel for the minor ones. The only exceptions were made by Sparrow, who ordained once at Launceston—a boon to Cornish candidates—and by Lamplugh, who did the like at Shobrooke. Trelawny, however, broke away from this custom. He seems to have liked to live as a country squire, enjoying the good things of this world, and he was generally at home at Trelawne, except for a number of times when he sojourned in London, whither he went to attend Parliament. In order, therefore, to save himself the trouble of the journey to Exeter, he summoned his candidates to go to him—a considerable undertaking for most of the Devonians, Pelynt being some twenty miles beyond Plymouth; and there he held as many as 53 of his 78 Ordinations, 35 in his own house at Trelawne, and 18 in the parish church. For the others he paid a visit to Exeter, the visit occasionally lasting two or three months; but only twice during his last seven years did his ordinands have any other option than that of travelling to Trelawne. Blackall, however, reverted to the former arrangement, making use of the Cathedral for his chief Ordinations, and the Palace Chapel for all others.

The religious persecution in France—a tremendous political blunder, culminating in the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685, which deprived that country of 400,000 highminded inhabitants—compelled large numbers of refugees to seek asylum in England. Many of them settled in Exeter, Plymouth, Stonehouse, Dartmouth, and Barnstaple, coming chiefly from the provinces of Saintonge, Aunis, and Poitou, which were the most Protestant districts of France and the most cruelly persecuted. Everywhere they were cordially received, Jacques Fontaine's experience being typical, when he wrote :—" The good folk of Barnstaple showed themselves full of compassion in our regard : they made us welcome in their homes, and entreated us with affectionate care." In the five places mentioned above they were numerous enough to form congregations, some of them holding aloof as nonconformists, but the great majority

conforming to the English Church sufficiently to be granted the use of consecrated buildings—at Exeter they had St Olave's Church, and at Barnstaple St Anne's Chapel—and at Plymouth at least there were many who became Anglicans. For the conformist congregations ministers were episcopally provided—Bishop Lamplugh ordained seven Frenchmen in 1686 and 1687—and pecuniary aid was given from a Bounty Fund. These grants were gradually reduced, as the communities became prosperous; but so late as 1760 the Exeter congregation sent through Bishop Lavington a petition to Archbishop Secker, asking that the small sum allowed them might be increased, so as to enable them to support their minister adequately.*

* Abbey's *English Church*, I, 5; *Registers of the French Churches*, C. E. Lart, vol. XX; *Protestants from France*, 92, 120, 121, 122; *Notes and Gleanings*, I, 95.

CHAPTER XX.

HANOVERIAN TIMES.

A bright future, indeed, seemed to await the Church of England at the time when the reign of Queen Anne drew to its close. No monarch could have been more devoted to the cause than Anne, for she was truly religious, and was bent on using for the highest good of the Church all the influence and power that God had given her. And, in pursuing such a policy, she was doing what was well pleasing to her subjects, for the Church enjoyed the full admiration and affection of the nation. It had been popular before, and after the Sacheverell incident in 1709 it rose to a very acme of popularity, and withal was supported by an entirely friendly Government, which was Tory and High Church. William III had posed as the leader of Protestantism in Europe; and in England, at least, Roman Catholicism had been feeble and obscure, discredited in the eyes of the people, and unable to recover from the well-meant but damaging favouritism of James II. Dissent, too, had been waning; not so much because it had to hide its head, lest the penal laws should be put into operation, but because of the immense popularity and the superior learning and efficiency of the national Church. For the reign of Queen Anne was a time of remarkable ecclesiastical efficiency: the bishops as a body were able and scholarly, and no fault was to be found with them as regards either life or work; the clergy, though most of them were poor, and many of humble birth and illiterate and lacking in refinement, generally maintained a high standard of religion and morality; and services were not only numerous, but well attended, weekly Communions and double daily services being usual in London and fairly common elsewhere, with large congregations every day at six o'clock Mattins. It is true that the country had not recovered

from the licence that became so rife after the Restoration and was encouraged by the loose manners of the Court of Charles II, so that the moral code of society, both high and low, was shockingly bad; but the Church was fully awake, and was making magnificent efforts to combat the evil, especially through the agency of Societies for the Reformation of Manners.

With all these splendid advantages, it might seem that the Church of England was entering on a course of unparalleled success and influence for good. But under the Hanoverian rule the bright prospect began at once to be dimmed, and conditions grew steadily darker as that period advanced. Of course there were some already existing weaknesses, which developed as time went on—the clergy distrusted their bishops, fearing that they might betray the Church to presbyterianism; there were serious quarrels in Convocation—High Churchmen *versus* Low; and there were doctrinal controversies, affecting the very fundamentals of the Faith, especially the deistic attack on revealed religion, championed by John Toland in his widely read *Christianity not Mysterious*. But, besides these, there were other malign influences, that came into being only after the end of Queen Anne's reign. At once on mounting the throne George I called the Whigs into office, and very soon a twofold effect was apparent, and continued for a century. In the first place, the ministers of State gave way to the temptation that always besets unscrupulous political leaders—they treated ecclesiastical office as a reward for party support and an earnest of future service; and, again, whenever their choice was untrammelled by interference such as that of Queen Caroline, they selected their bishops from the party who were at once Whigs and Latitudinarians. In his *Lives of the Chancellors* Lord Campbell tells us that Lord Hardwicke "thought it his duty to dispose of the ecclesiastical preferments in his gift with a view to increase his own political influence, without any scrupulous regard for the interest of religion"; and that keen churchman, Dr Johnson, declared that "no man can now be made a bishop for his learning and piety; his only chance of promotion is his being con-

nected with some one who has parliamentary interest." Naturally, bishops who owed their places to their political activity would be ready, or even anxious, to promote the interests of their party by similarly dispensing their patronage. Furthermore, Robert Walpole was the Church's worst friend, for, acting on his favourite maxim of "Quieta non movere," he used his best endeavour to hush all religious discussions and to smother all Church activities, because he felt that they might bring about dangerous results.

But the most cruel wrong inflicted on the Church was the silencing of her Convocations. There is no denying the fact that acrimonious and unseemly party strifes had broken out and brought the assemblies into discredit, and that the members were too prone to pass censures on those whom they thought heretical, instead of confining their debates to more profitable topics; but these faults were a totally insufficient justification for depriving the Church of all opportunity of discussing matters concerning her welfare and the well-being of the State, of reforming abuses and initiating fresh activities, and of expressing her opinion or taking corporate action on any subject of importance or interest. From 1717 onwards for 135 years the Convocations were not permitted to meet, except for purely formal and profitless business; and it is not surprising that, when she was rendered dumb and powerless, the Church of England lapsed into a condition of suspended animation. Certainly, there were to be found at any time during that period clergymen who were at once loyal to the Church and devoted to their duties. But in an age when diocesan synods and ruri-decanal chapters were only distant memories, and congresses and conferences had not yet come into existence, almost the only scope for a clergyman's activities was his own parish, or such opportunities as were offered by Societies, not established by the Church or authorized to represent the Church, but organized and worked merely by irresponsible individuals. Other religious bodies enjoyed freedom of internal action, or at least free powers of consultation: the Established Church alone was gagged and fettered.

The most flagrant abuses of that age—pluralities and

non-residence—were very largely a consequence of the poverty of the clergy, especially those in the country. The majority of the benefices were so inadequately endowed that an incumbent could only earn a competence by holding two or three at once, or by engaging in some secular employment. The more genteel among them would welcome the chance of becoming domestic chaplains in the houses of great men—a somewhat servile and despised position; the more intellectual would seek a mastership in a Grammar School and go to live near their work, leaving their flock to the care of a curate or a neighbouring cleric; while others were clergymen on the Sunday, and in the week were farmers or labourers, either taking or sending by their wives their produce to the nearest town on market-days. A return of 1737 informs us that out of 12,000 benefices as many as 2,700 were without a resident incumbent, and later in the century conditions must have been considerably worse than that. Under such circumstances curates were necessarily numerous, and many would see little or no prospect of ever obtaining a benefice; so that a large number of clergymen, many of them elderly and doubtless having wives and families, had to struggle to live on a pittance of £30 or £40 (£140 or £187).

Thus, a review of Church conditions in the Hanoverian period is sad and depressing, for all these adverse circumstances combined to lower the standard of her efficiency, to lessen her work and influence, and to degrade her in public opinion. Her state was certainly far superior to that of Christianity in France and in Germany; but though her bishops were almost all gentlemen of probity and honour, and several were conspicuous for religion and learning, yet after the middle of the eighteenth century they were generally but lightly esteemed, as being lovers of ease and seeming more ornamental than useful; the clergy, who as a class were not highly regarded before, sank even lower in public opinion because of their slackness, their neglect of duty, and their servility; and the services were reduced to a maximum of two on Sunday with Holy Communion three or four times a year, and very occasional observance of any Holy Days.

Like his predecessor Blackall, Lancelot Blackburne was a Londoner; but in religious and spiritual life the two were widely contrasted. It is not easy to arrive at any sure conclusion as to how far the allegations against his moral character were true, but certainly Blackburne's reputation was an evil one; and it was damaging to the Church of England that a clergyman, who at least laboured under undenied incriminations of a serious nature—which were widely believed at the time—and who in consequence had once been obliged to resign the subdeanery of Exeter, should be able to mount successively to the deanery of Exeter, the archdeaconry of Cornwall, the episcopate of Exeter, and even the archiepiscopate of York. The very outset of his clerical career was unfortunate—or worse—for shortly after his ordination he went out to the West Indies on secret service for the Government, and was believed to have taken part in a buccaneering expedition against the Spaniards. Afterwards he attached himself to Sir Jonathan Trelawny on the latter becoming Bishop of Exeter, and it was under his patronage or through his support that he became a prebendary, and Dean of Exeter, and Rector of Calstock. He always bore his benefactor in grateful remembrance; and long afterwards, when he made his will, he left to Edward Trelawny a portrait of his father, "my most honoured friend and patron." The scandals concerning his low standard of morality and his irreligion belong more to his lengthy reign at York than to his seven years' episcopate at Exeter; and it was after he had been sent north by Walpole that there occurred the incident of his scandalizing the vicar of Nottingham by ordering pipes and tobacco and liquor into the vestry "for his refreshment after the fatigue of Confirmation." Still, even at Exeter the general estimate of his life and character must have been efficacious in blasting any good influence that he might have exercised, and in hampering the religious work of the Church.*

The official returns of his episcopate (1717-1724) are indicative of neglect of duty on his part, and of lack of confidence

* *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, V, 123; Oliver's *Bishops*, 161; Abbey's *English Church*, I, 374; Wills, P.C.C., Boycott, 144.

in him on the part of others. They shew that his ordination candidates were fewer than those at any other period in the course of the history of the diocese, save occasionally at some past time of special trouble; that he ordained only twice a year, generally in his palace chapel at Exeter, and in the summer, his winters apparently being spent elsewhere; and that he personally instituted but few of his clergy, some of whom he required to suit his convenience by appearing before him in London or Bath for the ceremony.

The eighteenth century was a very dead time as regards church fabrics. The only new erections of the previous period were Charles' Church at Falmouth and Charles' Church at Plymouth, and Kellond Chapel (consecrated in 1687); but after these we hear of no others. There is mention indeed of the extension of the south aisle at Wendron (1719), the restoration of Sidbury Church (1719), a new bell at Brixham (1724), the building of new aisles at Falmouth (1726), the rebuilding of Fen Ottery chancel (1728), the erecting of a new altar-piece at Okehampton (1729), and the enlarging of the south aisle of Merther (1733); but the mention of these trifling works, so few in number, merely emphasizes the lack of ecclesiastical enterprise that prevailed in that whole period, up to the nineteenth century.

So soon as people began to recover from the disturbing effects of the Commonwealth age, and returned to church-going habits, they became anxious about sittings, and at once the Bishop's officials were beset with petitions for faculties. Sometimes there would be an application for a whole space in a church, as when Edward Chapman obtained licence to erect pews at the west end of the north aisle of Constantine Church, or when an aisle at Chagford was allotted to Rowland Whiddon. But more often it was a matter of one or more seats, which were assigned to some person or persons; and such cases became more and more numerous as the High Church revival of Queen Anne's reign gathered strength. Occasionally we find a sort of competition, everyone trying to secure a permanent right in the best part of a church, a remarkable instance being Topsham, where five faculty seats were granted in November 1712, another in the following

month, eight more in January, one in February, three in March, and yet another in September. Such keenness not infrequently led to serious disputes, and the Bishop had sometimes to appoint a commission to settle rival claims. Troubles at Colyton, Tintagel, and Penzance were dealt with in this way; as also another at Tavistock in 1682, when the commission numbered thirteen persons, and included the Portreeve of the town, the Archdeacon of Totnes, Sir Francis Drake, and six clergymen.

The fashion of erecting galleries started later than the race for securing faculty seats, but in course of time entries concerning them grew quite numerous. Some of the earliest were Seaton and Talaton (1698), Countisbury (1706), Ashprington (1711), and Wendron (1719); and after that they became common, faculties being granted during the next few years for St Andrew's at Plymouth, Teignmouth, Okehampton, Northam, Callington, St German's, Truro, and other places. In some churches the old pulpit was banished at that period, a reading-pew being put in its stead; but elsewhere the existing reading-desk and pulpit were both swept away, apparently to give place to a "three-decker." In the same official records we are able to trace the advent of high pews, which began to fill up the churches from about 1733, when a faculty issued for the converting of three seats into one entire pew at Kenton. It was an age of degeneracy, indeed, when by the system of faculty seats and family pews the poor were relegated to the obscure corners of their parish churches, or even altogether ousted therefrom; and our sympathy goes out to those little girls of Kenn, whose two benches were allocated to John Short, merchant, by the Bishop's authority.

During Blackburne's time Dissent had been growing strong in Devon, but—strangely enough—not in Cornwall. We have the authority of Daniel Defoe, who travelled through the diocese in the closing year of this episcopate, for the statement that in the latter county there were then only four meeting-houses, whereas east of the Tamar there were about seventy. With the exception of the newly built one at Liskeard, the Cornish examples were quite insignificant;

but some in the sister county were exceedingly large and fine, one being at Dartmouth, which, he remarked, "as most of the towns in Devonshire are, is full of dissent," while Bideford was another dissenting stronghold.*

Stephen Weston, a Berkshire man, had no special interest in the west country before he became Bishop of Exeter; and, though at the time he was Vicar of Mapledurham in Oxfordshire, his bent had been almost entirely educational, for most of his career had been occupied by a fellowship at King's College, Cambridge, and a mastership at Eton—his own school. It was through the latter connection that he was raised to the episcopate, for which, being a Whig, he was recommended by Sir Robert Walpole, one of his old boys, at the very mature age of fifty-nine (1724). He was, as were most of the Exeter bishops of that period, very much of a pluralist, augmenting his comparatively small episcopal income by holding the posts of Treasurer and Canon of the Cathedral, Archdeacon of Exeter, and Rector of Shobrooke and of Calstock. He resided generally in his palace, though in most years he spent a couple of months in London for the sessions of Parliament. He was diligent in holding Ordinations, and under him the number of candidates soon began to rise, and he was conscientious in officiating in person at institutions; but in his dealings with his clergy he could never forget that he had been a schoolmaster and a college don, so that he was to them rather an official than a Father-in-God. His death in his own home closed an uneventful rule of seventeen years; and his body, whose burial he left to the discretion of his executors, was interred in his Cathedral—being the first to be laid there since William Cotton, with the sole exception of Ofspring Blackall.†

His successor, Nicholas Clagett (1742-1746) was also a conscientious prelate, except that his annual winter visits to London were unduly prolonged. His appointment to Exeter seems to have been dictated simply by the accident

* *Early Tours*, 152, 157, 172.

† *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, LX, 371; Oliver's *Bishops*, 162; Wills, P.C.C., Trenley, 49.

of Weston's death occurring at the time when Clagett's translation from St David's was due; for he belonged to the other side of England, being a native of Bury St Edmund's, where his father and grandfather had ministered at St Mary's, and the latter had suffered deprivation for nonconformity at the Restoration. He himself held the deanery of Rochester before going to St David's, but in neither place and in no way did he distinguish himself, and the record of his rule at Exeter is a barren one. His will reveals him as a man of simple and unostentatious views: he directs his body to be buried at whatsoever place he may happen to die, and desires that his burial "may be ordered in the most frugal manner possible, in particular that no escutcheons may be about my herse or coffin." His death actually occurred in London, after only four years' occupancy of the see, and his body was interred in St Margaret's Church, Westminster. He left his property to be divided between his brother and two sisters, and we may infer that his estate was very small, for special legacies are merely "twenty shillings and no more" to his nephew William Clagett, and "one shilling and no more" to the said William's mother.*

There would seem, too, to have been but little justification for the singling out of George Lavington for the high distinction of becoming an English diocesan bishop. True, he was acknowledged by his contemporaries to be "a person of admirable natural parts, good manners, sound judgment, and of a very remarkable sweetness of temper in all conversation"—in other words, he was a well-bred gentleman. But, being merely the son of a Wiltshire country parson, he had spent all the time of his ministry as an Oxfordshire and then as a London incumbent, with no distinction beyond that of a fellowship at New College and the publication of some sermons. As in so many other instances at that period, his promotion was due to party politics, for at Jacobite Oxford he had been one of the few who avowed themselves Hanoverians; and consequently he had been appointed a

* *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, X, 366; Oliver's *Bishops*, 162; Wills, P.C.C., Edmunds, 351.

chaplain to George I, had been made a prebendary of Worcester and afterwards of St Paul's, and then had been recommended by the Whigs for the see of Exeter (1747).

That was an age when members of the hierarchy had ample leisure, so that each could enjoy indulgence in his own particular hobby; and as one man was delighted to become Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, because he would have plenty of time to arrange his library and to correspond with his friends, so Bishop Lavington had his hobby, devoting himself to natural history. His treasured collection of shells, fossils, petrifactions, dried fish, birds, and such-like curiosities he was careful to devise by will to his only child Ann, who was married to the Reverend Nutcombe Quicke, Rector of Morchard Bishop.

The outstanding feature of this otherwise uneventful episcopate is the paper warfare that was waged between Lavington on one side and John Wesley and his supporters on the other. The Bishop exercised great severity against those of his clergy who showed favour to Methodism, and in 1747 he published his most famous work, *The Enthusiasm of Methodists and Papists compared*, in which he set forth for reprobation the early Wesleyans' excesses—stigmatized by the then contemptuous designation of "enthusiasm"—and attempted to show that Methodism was practically Popery in disguise. His book is acknowledged to be clever and ably expressed, and his opponents are said to have found it to be so damaging that they used their best endeavours to buy up copies in order to destroy them; but, though he successfully convicted Wesley of extravagances and minor mistakes, he failed to grasp his high spiritual aims or to appreciate the nobleness of his labours, and he omitted to combat—even to notice—his more serious theological errors. Wesley, Whitefield, and Perronet all entered the lists against him; and the public controversy, which called forth four separate publications from the Bishop, continued for several years. Happily, however, it had died down long before 1762, when it is delightful to find Wesley recording in his *Journal*, only a fortnight previous to the prelate's death, that he was

"well pleased to partake in the Cathedral of the Lord's Supper with my old opponent Bishop Lavington." *

There were two or three features of Church life which arrested the attention of Dr Richard Pococke, afterwards Bishop of Ossory and of Meath, who travelled through England in the middle of the eighteenth century. The first was that the Exeter diocese was peculiar, in that the old institution of rural deans was there kept in operation. He tells us that they were appointed at the Visitation, and had to inspect their churches, and order the necessary repairs to be made, defaulters being delated to the Bishop's Court. He notes, too, that in many parts it was customary for the Parish Clerk to read the First Lesson, with the consequence that "that office is frequently very ill executed." Again, in West Cornwall he came across the ancient observance of parish feasts, but he found that the keeping of them was accompanied by "great prophaneness and debauchery." †

The two outstanding clerical figures of Lavington's episcopate were unquestionably John Wesley and Samuel Walker; and, while we have to allow that the former was the more remarkable and his influence vastly more extensive, yet Walker's principles were the sounder, his influence more intensive, and, in contrast to Wesley's very lengthy ministry, his special work was closely synchronous with the Bishop's fifteen years' tenure of office. Walker was altogether a west-countryman, for he was born in Exeter (which city his grandfather Sir Thomas Walker represented in Parliament), his mother was a grand-daughter of Bishop Hall, and he was educated in the local Grammar School, and at Exeter College, Oxford. At the University he made logic his special study, and there also doubtless he became acquainted with the methods and evangelistic efforts of Whitefield and the Wesleys. He then learned more of life and conditions in the west by serving in the parishes of Doddiscombsleigh and Lanlivery, and in 1746 became Vicar of Talland and

* *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, XXXII, 212; Oliver's *Bishops*, 163; *J. Wesley*, Overton, 157; Overton and Relton, 163; Abbey's *English Church*, I, 290, 394; Wills, P.C.C., St Eloy, 417.

† *Early Tours*, 209, 210.

Curate-in-charge of Truro, fixing his residence in the latter place. At first he gave himself up to gaiety and pleasure, though he also won for himself a reputation as an eloquent preacher; but soon he came under the saintly influence of George Conon, Master of the Grammar School. His life then became more serious and wholly devoted to his holy calling, and he consecrated his gifts and powers to proclaiming the great basal doctrines of evangelical theology—repentance, faith, and the new birth. Disappointed at his defection, his pleasure-seeking friends turned against him, and tried to bring him into disfavour with the Bishop, and then to induce the Rector to get rid of him, but both schemes failed. Practical proof of his own conversion was afforded by his resigning Talland, as he recognised that he could not do justice to two widely separated cures held in plurality; and even more convincing was his refusal of a most attractive matrimonial opportunity, on the ground that abnegation would be more profitable to his ministry. The earnestness of his preaching, too, so appealed to the people that crowds came to hear—in such numbers that meanwhile the town seemed to be deserted, and the playhouse and the cockpit were permanently closed. For men were attracted by his loving nature, and, while he boldly rebuked vice, he was gentle in dealing with sinners, and withal was felt to be a wise guide of souls.

His special system was the enrolment of his disciples in a religious society or guild, after the model of those of a former generation, binding them to observe certain rules of conduct; or rather, there were two societies—one for single men, and the other for married men and for women. For the young there were classes, and they were instructed in private, and afterwards publicly catechised in church in the presence of a congregation that might number as many as five hundred. Himself entirely loyal to the Church's ordinances—he was scrupulous in having daily services and in observing the festivals and fasts of the Christian Year—he bestowed special care on the preparation of communicants for the Sacrament, he made Lent a very solemn time, and he gave special courses of instruction in connection with Christmas, Easter, and Whitsunday. A further organization was a "Parsons'

Club," an association of the clergymen of the neighbourhood, who held monthly meetings to "consult upon the business of their calling." The membership started at seven and increased to eleven, and they used to meet at each other's houses, spending together in conference the whole day from 10 till 6, with only an interval for a simple meal. One of the members was chosen once to preach at a Bishop's Visitation; but, as he was so bold as to include some words comdemnatory of clerical non-residence and pluralities, he incurred episcopal disapproval.

An example of Walker's deep spiritual influence over men is given in connection with the quartering of three companies of soldiers at Truro. For them he provided a "soldiers' sermon" on Sunday afternoons, and one result was that over a hundred of them came to his house, asking what they were to do. The effect of his words is strongly reminiscent of similar descriptions in Wesley's *Journal*:— "One or two only of the whole excepted, you would have seen their countenances changing, tears often bursting from their eyes, and confessions of their exceeding sinfulness and danger breaking from their mouths." He banded together twenty of them as the nucleus of "The Soldiers' Society," and of those twenty only six Scotchmen and one English dissenter had any religious knowledge, the rest—terrible reflection on the Church of England—being "totally ignorant of everything relating to Christ." The captain forbade them to go to him for private instruction, but two hundred and fifty insisted on going; and so manifest was the improvement in their life and morals and discipline, that the officers in a body called on him in order to thank him for the reformation that he had produced. Very touching was the farewell they took of their spiritual guide on the eve of their departure; and next day "they began their morning's march, praising God for bringing them under the sound of his gospel," and exclaiming as they caught glimpses of the town on their tramp, "God bless Truro."

John Wesley several times made mention of Samuel Walker in his *Journal*, but not sympathetically. He lighted upon a few members of the Society in Truro in 1755; but,

though they welcomed him, he "was constrained to break from them." Preaching at St Ewe a couple of years later, he noted that he had a "large congregation, many of whom were in Mr Walker's societies." Again, in Truro five years after Mr Walker's decease he wrote, "I was in hopes, when Mr Walker died, the enmity in those who were called his people would have died also. But it is not so. They still look upon us as rank heretics, and will have no fellowship with us." We are not convinced that the adherents of Walker were to blame, and in the light of the first note, it would appear that the unwillingness to fraternize emanated rather from Wesley. However, the Wesley brothers were wont to consult him both personally and by letter on matters of doctrine and discipline, especially concerning the question of separating from the Church of England, and Walker's reasonings and persuasions were efficacious. He was not blind to the weaknesses and the dangerous tendencies of the Wesleyan methods, and not only was very careful to avoid such in his own organization, but also warned the Wesleys, especially as to the undue influence exercised by the lay preachers, who were generally men of low station and small education.

Walker was only 46 when he died, worn out by his incessant devotion to duty, especially the personal dealing with individual souls (1761). His influence endured, especially by means of his writings, chiefly sermons and lectures on the Church's doctrines. These were very widely read, particularly *The Christian—a course of practical sermons*, which was re-issued again and again, until it even reached a twelfth edition so recently as 1879.*

A scion of the nobility, his father being Earl of Albemarle and his maternal grandfather having been Duke of Richmond, the Honourable Frederick Keppel as a supporter of the Whig party was assured good preferment in the Church. We have no proof that he was a man of parts; but, when he was only twenty-five, he received the honour of a canonry

* *Samuel Walker*, Sidney; *Samuel Walker*, Ryle; *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, LIX, 84; *Bishopric of Truro*, 11; *Evangelical Revival*, 82; Wesley's *Journal*, II, 339, 426; III, 264.

at Windsor. He was also a Chaplain-in-Ordinary to both George II and George III ; and at the early age of thirty-five his aristocratic and political friends obtained for him the bishopric of Exeter (1762), the deanery of Windsor being added in order to ensure him a sufficient income. He was thus able to spend large sums in improving the Palace, and to his credit it must be added that he was generous in helping his poorer clergy ; but he was a good deal absent from his diocese, spending the earlier part of each year—sometimes five or six months—in more attractive London, or enjoying the honour of residence in Windsor Castle, where he occasionally held an Ordination in St George's Chapel. He occupied the see of Exeter for fifteen years, and on his decease (in 1777) the *Gentleman's Magazine* could find no more to say of him than that he was " a prelate of a most amiable character."*

He was the first of the Exeter bishops to hold systematically Visitations of his diocese. His predecessors had done so occasionally—Blackburne and Weston and Clagett once each, and Lavington twice—but Keppel visited four times, making it his practice to go through his diocese every three or four years. The records of Keppel's Visitations are extant, and sad indeed is the revelation that they give of the low standard of duty and work prevalent in the Church of England at that period. The official returns tell us the facts as regards clerical residence, officiating ministers, and number of Sunday services ; or perhaps we ought to say that the actual condition was probably even worse than is stated in the incumbents' replies to the Bishop's enquiries, for it is but natural that they should fully declare the performance of their obligations and should belittle their delinquencies.

The first of the series is the record of a Visitation of Cornwall in 1765, when the Bishop was at Bodmin on July 1st, at Truro on July 4th, at Penzance on July 9th, and at Launceston on July 18th. We learn that the proper provision of services, if a parish had a resident minister of its own, was two on each Sunday with one sermon—generally in the morning. In some churches there was a second sermon

* *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, XXXI, 42 ; Oliver's *Bishops*, 163 ; *Gentleman's Mag.*, XLVII, 612.

in the afternoon, but that was unusual; and in most cases the second sermon was dropped in the winter or "the dead season," the afternoon service being not uncommonly dropped with it. There is mention also of a "Sacrament Sunday"—doubtless occurring three or possibly four times in the year. This rather meagre list of services was common in town churches as in those in the country, being found at Bodmin, Liskeard, and Penzance, which in the winter had two services and one sermon, and two sermons in the summer; Truro, however, never had more than one sermon, and in winter no afternoon service was held at St Austell.

But the worst feature was the prevalence of non-residence, which was generally, though not always, a consequence of pluralism. Many incumbents held two or even three benefices in the same neighbourhood; but a considerable number had one in Cornwall and another far away in Devon or much further afield, and scandalous cases of prolonged non-residence were not a few. For instance, the Vicar of Tintagel had been living for nearly thirty years at Penryn, where he acted as lecturer and schoolmaster; the Vicar of St Cleer, who was also Rector of St Mary Tavy near Tavistock, had for thirty-four years resided at East Looe, whose church he served; the Rector of Creed and the Vicar of St Austell had both spent the last five years in Bath; and the Rector of Stoke Climsland, resident at St Austell, had for twenty years past left his parish to a curate, non-resident at that time, and his other cure of St German's to an unlicensed curate, his house at Stoke Climsland being uninhabitable and the chancel in ruinous condition.

There were then eleven parishes in what is now the deanery of Stratton, and among that small number we have the following sorry conditions. The Rector of Kilkhampton lived in London, committing his flock to the care of a curate, who was only a deacon and was not licensed. The Vicar of Stratton was also Rector of Luffincott in Devon, where he resided, serving it and Werrington, Stratton being under the charge of a curate, who had not been able to obtain a licence, because he was infirm and unable to ride. Marham-church's Rector was an absentee "by reason of his necessary

attendance on his affairs in Berkshire." The Rector of Jacobstow was permanently settled at St Veep, his other living, and the Vicar of Poundstock was at Modbury in South Devon, which he served; and between them they supported a curate, who conducted one service a Sunday in either place. There was only one service at Week St Mary, because the Rector, who was nearly eighty years of age, could undertake no more; and there was only one at Whitstone, because the Rector officiated also at Boyton, five miles distant. The statistics of three years later inform us that there were then only 82 resident incumbents in Cornwall, there being at least 71 non-residents, besides several whose blank returns are probably indicative of absence.

The worst deaneries were Trigg Major and Trigg Minor, the former having 14 non-residents out of 26, and the latter 13 out of 19. Of course poverty was an excuse in some cases, and, indeed, stipends were shockingly inadequate, and the cases were not rare in which there was no house. How could Robert Blachford manage to live on £11 (£40) as Vicar of Tywardreath and £8 (£29) as Vicar of St Samson, neither benefice having house or glebe? Samuel Gurney, also, was a pluralist, and a non-resident, putting a curate to serve Warleggan and another to take charge of Colan; but the system, rather than the man, is to be blamed, for he only pocketed £10 (£36) from the one and £20 (£72) from the other; and having seven children to support, he made his home at Tregony, where he was Master of the Grammar School, and served the churches of Merther and Cornelly for £38 (£138) a year. St Anthony-in-Meneage was worth only £22 (£80), and the stipend of Looe Chapel was £30 (£109) without a house—less than a curate's pay, which averaged about £38 (£138) in Cornwall at that time.

Bishop Keppel's second Visitation was held in July 1768, the centres chosen being Exeter, Honiton, Tiverton, Barnstaple, Torrington, Okehampton, Launceston, Truro, Helston, Penzance, Bodmin, Liskeard, Totnes, and Plymouth. The Diocesan Registry contains the returns of all the deaneries except Barnstaple, Dunkeswell, and Shirwell, and they are a valuable source of information concerning the state of

the Church in the diocese. We have already considered Cornwall, and now proceed to examine conditions in Devon. The state of things here is much the same, though perhaps it is not quite so unusual for a church to have two sermons on each Sunday; but none had more than two services, not even St Andrew's Church and Charles' Church in Plymouth, though the former had in residence a vicar, a lecturer, and a curate (with a stipend of £50, *i.e.*, £175), and the latter a vicar and a curate (with £40, *i.e.*, £140). The returns show that at least 45 per cent. of the incumbents were non-resident, and that over 48 per cent. of the benefices were held in plurality.

By way of illustration of the evils ensuing, a few instances may be quoted. The curate of Great Torrington conducted a Grammar School there, and managed to serve the churches at Petersmarland and St Giles-in-the-Wood; but he was also Rector of Landcross (worth only £20, *i.e.*, £70), which he provided with one service in a fortnight by employing the Rector of Littleham for six guineas (£22) a year; besides which he was Vicar of Shapwick in Somerset. The Rector of Alverdiscott (whose parsonage was unfit for occupation) was at the same time Rector of Newton Tracy, but he delegated his responsibilities at his two parishes to a curate, and lived in Barnstaple, from which he served the churches at Swymbridge and Landkey. A man of much divided interests was Joseph Hall, resident curate of Woolfardisworthy (East), for not only was he able to assist the Rector of Washford Pyne, but he also held the rectory of Belstone and the perpetual curacy of Lynton and Countisbury. The Rector of Sutcombe, who was also a Cornish Vicar, deserted both his benefices, preferring to earn an income at Launceston as Master of the Grammar School and licensed curate of the parishes of St Thomas's and St Stephen's.

There were a number of parishes neglected like Shaldon, which had to be satisfied with one afternoon service in a fortnight, because its incumbent, who was also Rector of Wydecombe-in-the-Moor, resided in Teignmouth and served that parish as well as Shaldon; or like Offwell, whose rector lived in Exeter, and made no regular provision for his ministerial duties; or like Eggesford and Mariansleigh, whose

pluralist incumbent professed to conduct one service a Sunday at each, except in the winter, "when it is impossible on account of the badness of the roads and shortness of the days." The Rector of Bigbury had for several years been away in Spain; the Vicar of Hartland, who had no house, was believed to be resident in London, and paid a curate £30 (£105) to go over from Clovelly to take his duty; the extensive parish of Stokenham with its chapels at Chivelstone and Sherford had only one Sunday service, the Vicar being a resident of Dartmouth and serving St Petrox Church there; the Vicar of Walkhampton was Master of the Exeter Grammar School, and served three churches in that city; and the Minister of Sampford Spiney was Perpetual Curate of St Budeaux, where he resided, and paid £35 (£123) to the curate-in-charge of Shaugh Prior for a weekly service in his moorland church. Honiton was one of the worst provided deaneries, for 16 of its 27 benefices were held in plurality, and 15 of its incumbents were non-resident; another was Holsworthy, where its non-residents outnumbered its residents by 9 to 7; and a third was Chulmleigh, only three of its 14 parishes having the undivided attention of their respective incumbents.

Many other such cases might be quoted—so many indeed that those incumbents shine forth as honourable exceptions, who were each responsible for one parish only and provided their people with two services and sermons on every Sunday; and we may well admire the wisdom and the boldness of the Reverend Thomas Michell, who, residing in his vicarage house at Veryan and serving that cure only, appended this remark to his replies to the Bishop's Visitation enquiries:—"It would be for the Honor and Firmness of y^e^ established Church were there *no Pluralities*, or Commendams." Unhappily, the lowest depths had not been reached in 1768, and still further deterioration can be traced in succeeding Visitations; for, as the aged incumbents, who were not pluralists and were conscientious in giving their flock two full services, dropped off, there was a tendency to be content with less effort; and the common practice became yet commoner of allowing such a parish to be held with another, and to be provided with one weekly service by a neighbouring clergyman for an emolument of £15 or £20 per annum.

Some of the Confirmation returns of this period are stored among the diocesan archives, and a perusal of them throws much light upon an important branch of episcopal work, which to many remains wrapped in obscurity. Evidence is obtainable for only the earlier half of Keppel's episcopate, but from this, together with the records of his successor Bishop Ross, we gather that a triennial Confirmation tour through the whole diocese was an established custom, fourteen or fifteen centres in Devonshire being visited and thirteen in Cornwall. There were additional Confirmations in the city of Exeter, so that there the event was perhaps almost annual. Viewed from the standpoint of the present generation, which is accustomed to have due opportunity offered every year to all, (there being two or three Confirmations in each deanery annually,) it seems but a meagre provision to have only one Confirmation in three years, and to expect all the candidates from a deanery and a half—sometimes from two or even three deaneries—to travel to one centre.

The journeys were in many cases long—they would be long to us with our railways and good roads; and we are filled with wonderment, as we try to picture the arrangements for such undertakings as would be necessary, when many candidates had to be conveyed fifteen or twenty miles, as from Lynton to Barnstaple, or from Hartland to Bideford, or from Holsworthy to Okehampton, or from Kilkhampton to Launceston or Torrington. For in those days it was no small company that came even from a little country parish, and we cannot but be amazed at the enormous numbers of those presented for Confirmation. Take as a fair sample some of the figures at Torrington in 1764. There the confirmees of Great Torrington were 289, Beaford 82, Dolton 72, Milton Damarel 107, Winkleigh 164, Shebbear with Sheepwash 82, Langtree 99, Frithelstock 100, and St Giles-in-the-Wood 83. At Bideford candidates came from sixteen parishes, among them being 313 from Bideford, 260 from Northam, 187 from Buckland Brewer, and 103 from Hartland. To Okehampton Church there came 169 from Okehampton, 68 from Sampford Courtenay, 56 from Black Torrington, 55 from Ashwater, 172 from North Tawton, and 193 from

South Tawton. Evidently it was a regular and fully recognised custom that, with few exceptions, every one of sufficient age should submit to the rite, little or no regard being paid to choice or inclination or fitness.

It is worth while recalling to the mind that this was the period of John Wesley's activity in Cornwall, and it is astonishing and illuminating to notice that his work did not discourage or check the acceptance of this ordinance; for the numbers presented were very large, even from places most often visited in his mission tours. Here are some of the Confirmation statistics of Bishop Ross in 1779:— St Ives 147, Gwennap 88, Redruth 184, St Just 235, Penzance 255, St Agnes 223, Wendron 225, Camborne 199, Marazion 115, St Stephen's 145; and in 1786 the same prelate confirmed 83 from St Ives, 173 from Gwennap, 225 from Redruth, 156 from Penzance, 211 from Camborne, 91 from St Breage, 80 from Crowan, 144 from Illogan, and 324 from Helston.

The total numbers of the confirmed were of course immense. Bishop Keppel held general Confirmations in 1764 (Devon) and 1765 (Cornwall), the candidates numbering 41,642; and again in 1768, when the total was 17,728; the ratio in each case being almost exactly 4 in Devon to 3 in Cornwall; and, in addition, he confirmed in Exeter 830 in 1763, 407 in 1766, and 534 in 1769. The returns of Bishop Ross's triennial Confirmations were 26,671 in 1779, 14,938 in 1782, 22,289 in 1785-6, and (at two centres only) 2,618 in 1788. The churches at Honiton and Liskeard are not very spacious, and much good management must have been needed to enable the Bishop to lay his hand on 1,386 candidates at one Confirmation service in the former, and on 1,399 in the latter; and the same might be said concerning the 1,314 confirmed at one time at Bideford, and the 1,414 at South Molton. St Andrew's Church at Plymouth is larger, but yet even there skilful marshalling would be required for bringing to the Bishop the 1,479 candidates in 1779 and the 1,700 in 1785. There was always a huge throng at Totnes, and in 1764 the difficulty was partly met by holding a Confirmation on each of three successive days, the numbers being 1,509, 889, and 1,998 (from 21 parishes)—a total of

4,396. How busy the town must have been; and what scenes of excitement and confusion in connection with the supply of food and drink for such a multitude, and the conveying of them to their homes, some having to journey very far, as 79 to Stokenham and 110 to Wydecombe-in-the-Moor! But most remarkable was the service at Barnstaple on Friday, June 25th, 1779, when Bishop Ross confirmed the amazing number of 4,016 persons, assembled together from 39 parishes. It may appear almost incredible that this could really be so; but the details are all registered in the official returns, some of them being as follows:—Barnstaple 229, Braunton 186, Ilfracombe 182, Fremington 146, Bishop's Tawton 140, Swymbridge 135, High Bickington 129, Tawstock 126, Atherington 109, Landkey 107, Pilton 103, Combe Martin 96, Shirwell 92, Lynton 90, West Down 90, Yarnscombe 90, Marwood 88, Parracombe 86.

A note respecting a Confirmation held in the Cathedral in 1766 gives us an indication how these events were managed, and we infer that the candidates were brought in by companies, one lot being admitted merely to receive the imposition of the Bishop's hand, and then leaving the church, another lot having been ushered in meanwhile. The note referred to is a direction that the 212 candidates from 10 parishes were to be in the Cathedral at eleven o'clock, and the 195 from 12 others at "half an hour after eleven." Again, the system of supplying the candidates with tickets was fully worked, as we know from the circumstance that the number of those confirmed without tickets at each centre is entered in the returns. That number was generally not large—perhaps a dozen or two—consisting of those who had left their tickets at home, or dropped them by the way. But occasionally they were multiplied owing to some confusion, as when the Chancellor, finding Kingsbridge Church filled, at the last moment transferred candidates to Loddiswell; or when about 400 of the 4,016 at Barnstaple either had not tickets or did not give them up.

Bishop Ross, whom we mentioned above, was a gentleman of admirable type, and—when judged by the standard of that age—a favourable example of his Order. The son of

a country solicitor at Ross in Herefordshire, he had made his way by useful work at Cambridge, filling various College offices at St John's, and editing Cicero's *Epistles*. A preachership at the Rolls, a Royal Chaplaincy, and a canonry at Durham paved the road to higher promotion, all his preferments being due to the influential patronage of the Marquis of Bath; and, though of a quiet and retiring nature, he commended himself at Exeter as at once a learned and a hospitable prelate (1778-1792). The statement that he made a point of personally examining each candidate for Deacon's Orders is evidence of his devotion to duty, and he showed his enlightenment—in advance of his generation—by his advocacy of a wide religious toleration. A sermon that he preached before the House of Lords, in which he urged the granting of entire freedom of belief and worship to Protestant Nonconformists, was influential in securing the passing of the Dissenters' Relief Bill of 1779, which allowed ministers, instead of subscribing to the Articles of Religion, to make a declaration that they accepted the Bible as the rule of their faith and practice. The incident of his entertaining John Wesley at luncheon, after they had together partaken of the Holy Communion in the Cathedral, occurred three years later, and was a further token of his freedom from narrow-mindedness. But the spirit of tolerance was not yet generally acceptable, and the Bishop's action was adversely criticized by bigoted Churchmen; though by others it was regarded as "only another proof, added to the many he had already given, of his amiable courtesy, candour, and good sense." He had no near relations to inherit his extensive libraries and his London house and that at Frome (whose benefice he held *in commendam*); but he left two hundred guineas to the Exeter Infirmary, and the books in his palace to the Dean and Chapter. His will also specified the exact wording of the very brief epitaph over his grave in his Cathedral—an indication of his sweet simplicity and humbleness of mind.*

* *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, XLIX, 266; Oliver's *Bishops*, 164; Abbey's *English Church*, II, 87, 97, 269; G. G. Perry, III, 16; *Gentleman's Mag.*, LIV, 280; LXII, 774; Wesley's *Journal*, IV, 234; Wills, P.P.C., Fountain, 509.

To Bishop Ross succeeded William Buller (1792-1796), a member of a good county family of Cornwall, and through his mother a grandson of Bishop Trelawny. For several years he held the honourable and lucrative post of Dean of Exeter, and during his time King George III paid a visit to the "Ever-faithful City." Bishop Ross was then an old man and growing feeble, so Dr Buller put his deanery house at his Majesty's service. The act of courtesy was followed by his promotion next year to the deanery of Canterbury, and soon after by his being appointed Bishop of Exeter. He survived his elevation only four years; and as he was for long the victim of an incurable disease, and also suffered severe domestic affliction, it is not surprising that scarcely anything is chronicled of himself personally and of his episcopal work. He held a Visitation, however, at least of the eastern part of Devon, in 1794—a time when the tide of Church activity was at about its lowest ebb. Here are some of the sad results of the deadness and neglectfulness of the eighteenth century. Very nearly 50 per cent. of the benefices had no resident incumbent, the figures obtainable for the three deaneries of Honiton, Plymtree, and Tiverton being 27 residents and 24 non-residents; and when a curate-in-charge was appointed (the average stipend being about £40, *i.e.*, £101), he not infrequently lived far away from the parish. The holding of pluralities was quite common—so common in the Plymtree deanery that out of 15 benefices as many as 10 had only a partial claim upon their parish priest. Furthermore, though the churches that enjoyed two full services on Sundays were in the majority, there were many that had only one sermon, and not a few in which there was no preaching at all. A number of the clergy did not take the trouble to send replies to his Lordship's Visitation enquiries; but the returns are sufficient to convince us that Church conditions were even less satisfactory than they were at the time of Bishop Keppel's Visitation a quarter of a century before.*

* Oliver's *Bishops*, 164; *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, XLIX, 266; Cowper's *Deans of Canterbury*, 201; Abbey's *English Church*, II, 270; *Gentleman's Mag.*, LXVI, 1061; Wills, P.C.C., Exeter, 15.

The illustrious house of Courtenay has given several sons to the English episcopate. William Courtenay was Bishop of Hereford and of London and Archbishop of Canterbury in the fourteenth century. His nephew Richard ruled at Norwich for a brief period early in the following century. We have already noticed the nephew of the latter, Peter Courtenay, Bishop of Exeter and of Winchester; and now in the person of Henry Reginald we meet with a second Exeter bishop of the same family. These four, together with their heraldic insignia, figure in a coloured window in the south aisle of Exeter Cathedral—the gift of William Reginald Courtenay, eleventh Earl of Devon. As a Devonian by origin, though not by birth (his father was Sir William Courtenay of Powderham), the young cleric had been given a prebendal stall in Exeter Cathedral; and to this was added, among other preferments, the rectory of St George's, Hanover Square, which he continued to hold *in commendam*; and then, though he does not seem to have distinguished himself in any way, he was made Bishop of Bristol, being translated to Exeter three years later (1797). He seems to have been a thoroughly estimable gentleman, though described as stiff and reserved in social intercourse; but his six years' tenure of the see was very barren, and nothing remarkable seems to have been done or written or said by him, or even attempted. Nor had he sufficient interest in any outside causes or persons to prompt him to remember them when he drew up his will, which is concerned solely with legacies to his wife and his seven children and his servants—a contrast from some of the pious and charitable wills of old times.*

It seems strange that the bishop of a great diocese like that of Exeter, with its heavy responsibilities and its many calls, should be spending his time and his powers in a royal palace, engaged as the private tutor of a princess; and especially so when we find that the prelate, John Fisher, was fifty-seven years of age, and that his pupil, Princess Charlotte of Wales, was only nine. It might reasonably

* *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, XII, 337; Oliver's *Bishops*, 165; Abbey's *English Church*, II, 270; *Gentleman's Mag.*, LXXIII, 602; Wills, P.C.C., vol. 671, p. 622.

have been thought that a more suitable arrangement could have been made by George III for the education of his granddaughter; but the King had a great liking for Dr Fisher, and had already tested his powers as instructor of his son Edward—afterwards Duke of Kent and father of Queen Victoria. His later task was by no means easy, inasmuch as the little Princess was sadly lacking in self-control; but the Bishop was well calculated to court success—as indeed proved to be the case. For not only had he excelled at Cambridge, as a scholarly member of Peterhouse and as tutor at St John's, but he was at once gentle and firm, and withal a man of refinement, courtesy, and real piety.

As a churchman Fisher was not in sympathy with the tenets of the Evangelical party, which at that time was coming into prominence and was so largely in agreement with the Dissenters of Calvinist tendencies—Presbyterians, Baptists, and Independents. He declared that the Church of England was safeguarded from Calvinism by the Articles of Religion; and, though ready to tolerate Roman Catholics, he was not so broad-minded towards Protestant Nonconformists. Dissent, however, was not to be coerced, and meeting-houses were now springing up all over the diocese—single ones in small country parishes like Farway and Combe Raleigh, Kentisbeare and Church Stanton, and two or three at Tiverton and Cullompton and Sidmouth and elsewhere. Bishop Fisher gave his support to the British and Foreign Bible Society, being one of its Vice-Presidents at its start in 1804, and he accomplished a Visitation of his diocese before beginning his tutorial work. It was a pity that the Exeter episcopate of so worthy a man was limited to four years (1803-1807)—if only he could have given himself to his diocese, instead of dividing his time between London and Windsor (of which he was a Canon); but his royal patron rewarded his services by translating him to Salisbury, whereby Exeter was a loser.*

Church life in England was awakening in the first decade of the nineteenth century, some of the stages being marked by the founding of such organizations as the British and Foreign School Society, the National Society for the Education

* *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, XIX, 64; Oliver's *Bishops*, 165.

of the Poor, and the Church Building Society. But as yet the quickening influences had but little effect upon the Exeter prelacy, and the next bishop, the Honourable George Pelham, was merely a sort of "roi fainéant." His qualification for the post consisted in his happening to be a son of the Earl of Chichester, who was a prominent Whig. Therefore it came to pass that this young cleric, who had started his career as a soldier, and had become a Canon of Chichester at the age of twenty-four, was made Bishop of Bristol when only thirty-seven, and four years later was moved on to Exeter (1807-1820). He is described as having been urbane in manners, punctual in the discharge of business, and impartial in his distribution of patronage; but he was a place-seeker, and he and his haughty wife set themselves to curry favour with the Prince Regent by frequent attendance at his dinners in the Pavilion at Brighton. The effort was not futile, though promotion was delayed for thirteen years; and the newly crowned George IV at once ministered to his ambition by granting him a transfer to Lincoln. His rather carelessly kept *Episcopal Registers* reveal to us the fact that his ordinands averaged almost the fewest of any time in the history of the diocese (12 deacons and 14 priests); and that, save in his first three years, he commonly disregarded altogether the Ember Seasons as times for conferring Holy Orders. His candidates, however, were almost without exception university men, though some had not taken their degrees.*

Pelham was succeeded by William Carey, a former Headmaster of Westminster School, who after thirteen years' successful and popular tenure of that office had retired to the country living of Cowley near Oxford. Some of his generation regarded him as an energetic prelate, and it may certainly be put to his credit that he held Visitations of his diocese at regular intervals of four years, and that under him the ordinands greatly increased in number, his yearly average rising to 18 deacons and 23 priests. He did not, however, remain very long at Exeter, being transferred after ten years (1820-1830), just before the close of the reign

* Oliver's *Bishops*, 166; *Gentleman's Mag.*, XCVII, 269.

of George IV, to the wealthier bishopric of St Asaph, in succession to a Devonshire man, John Luxmoore.*

Apparently a man of upright life, Carey could not, however, be acquitted of following in the easy path in which his predecessors had walked; and to rebuke him there arose the Reverend Jonas Dennis, Bachelor of Civil Law and Prebendary of Kerswell in the Castle of Exeter. A student of Church history and liturgiology, as well as Civil Law, a man of ready pen and of readier tongue, fearless, outspoken, and uncompromising, he denounced in scathing language the ecclesiastical evils and abuses of his time. So bold was he, that he even adopted the extreme measure of addressing a Petition to the House of Commons in 1826, which consisted of a vigorous and virulent indictment of his Bishop for offences, thirty-five in number, against various ecclesiastical canons. He was distressed because the Church's regulations and ordinances were not put into operation; for instance, that the Cathedral dignitaries and canons did not perform their appointed functions, or even keep their statutory residence. Therefore the offences alleged against the Bishop were chiefly those of neglect, inasmuch as he failed to enforce obedience on the part of others, or to render obedience in his own person (he was himself Treasurer of the Cathedral and a Canon Residentiary); and he allowed simony and non-residence to continue unchecked, as well as other wrongs, such as the charging of excessive fees for the Church's occasional offices.†

This same Prebendary Dennis figured prominently as an advocate of Church reform nine years later, when he took occasion of an election of Proctors for the Clergy to deliver a spirited and trenchant speech in Exeter Cathedral, protesting against the continued silencing of Convocation. He argued that Church reforms of various kinds were urgently needed, and that such could not be effected by Parliament, but by Convocation only. Convocation however was not permitted to do anything, so that the Church of England suffered a grievous wrong owing to this disability; whereas

* *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, IX, 77; Oliver's *Bishops*, 166.

† *A Living Prelate's Diocesan Government.*

all other religious bodies enjoyed the free action of their deliberative assemblies. He declared that the proctorial elections were mere mockeries, for they were not conducted in accordance with the Bishop of London's writ, and he had himself not been cited to one for nineteen years. He therefore pressed for the revival of Convocation, and also of Ruri-decanal Chapters; and he urged the election of men of energy and power as Proctors—men different from Dr Rodd, who during his seventeen years of office had never attended Convocation, or even been present at his own election.*

The last of the series of Hanoverian Bishops of Exeter was Christopher Bethell. Brought up in a parsonage, and approved as a classical scholar by gaining a Members' Prize at Cambridge, and well experienced in the Church as a Yorkshire rector and Dean of Chichester and Bishop of Gloucester, he might have been expected to have developed usefully the work of Carey. He was also—for that age—a strong Churchman, publishing among other works *A general view of the doctrine of Regeneration in Baptism.* But at Exeter he had not a real opportunity of showing his mettle, for the Duke of Wellington, who had placed him there (1830), six months later took him away to make him Bishop of Bangor. Poor Welsh Church! Out of 200,000 people in the Bangor diocese 195,000 were strangers to the English language, and their new bishop was ignorant of Welsh.†

* *Speech on the Election of Clerks for Convocation*, Feb. 13th, 1835.

† *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, IV, 426; Oliver's *Bishops*, 167.

CHAPTER XXI.

JOHN WESLEY IN THE WEST.

THE impression we gain of the condition of the Church in the west in the earlier part of the eighteenth century is that it was suffering largely from suspended animation. Life was there, for the clergy were not unbelievers, nor was immorality rife among them, and many were really pious and devoted. But the religious quickening, which was so marked in some parts during the reign of Queen Anne, affected but little this remote corner of England; and there was not much inspiration to be drawn from bishops who either were time-servers or were lacking in influence, or who at least did not exert themselves to make their influence felt in their dioceses. The consequence was that the parochial system appeared to be a failure, for the ordinances of religion were very largely neglected; and, though the instinct of religion in the hearts of the people was by no means dead, to a great extent it was dormant, and the Church's appeal to them elicited but a feeble response. But there was no denying the genuineness and the fervour of the response, when that appeal was couched in a form that suited their temperament, and by one who knew how to win their sympathy.

Such a man was John Wesley, himself of west country lineage—descended from the Westleys of Westleigh in North Devon—who loved the artisan and the rustic, and who to strong religious conviction and never failing holiness of life added an unbounded and entirely self-sacrificing desire to save men's souls. Furthermore, while he moulded his teaching and practice on the standard of the New Testament and the early Church, and had an innate admiration for all that was best in other creeds, whether Roman Catholic or Moravian or Puritan (and his parents had both been

Nonconformists in their early life), he was a loyal priest of the Church of England, who found delight in accepting her doctrine, her sacraments, her liturgy, and her customs, though not always her discipline or her organization. Thus, he regularly attended her services, even though not taking part as a minister; and he not unfrequently wrote notes thereon in his *Journal*, how that he had listened to "a useful sermon" at St Ives, or at St Agnes and at Sancreed "an excellent sermon"; that in the church at Plymouth the communicants were so numerous as three hundred; and that at Exeter he was "much pleased with the decent behaviour of the whole congregation at the Cathedral, as also with the solemn music at the post-communion, one of the finest compositions I ever heard"; and, on another occasion there, "the whole service was performed with great seriousness and decency. Such an organ I never saw or heard before, so large, beautiful, and so finely toned; and the music of 'Glory be to God in the highest' I think exceeded the *Messiah* itself." His careful churchmanship made him insist on the observance of Friday as a fasting-day, and the saying of the Litany on Wednesdays and Fridays; and prompted him to wear the canonical vesture of cassock and gown in all his preachings, and frequently to base his sermons on the Epistle or Gospel or Lessons for the day. Indeed, Canon Frederick Hockin, Rector of Phillack, in his *John Wesley and Modern Methodism* has collected a full catena of quotations from the great evangelist's own writings, which show that "not at one period only of his ministry but throughout the last fifty years of his life," he held and recommended the chief doctrines and practices of the Church of England, including apostolical succession, baptismal regeneration, confirmation, the real presence, fasting, and prayers for the departed.*

For the fulfilling of his life's great ideal—the bringing men to God—he employed his own method, which was intended to be merely auxiliary to the Church's system, and not to replace or supersede it. It all began by a preaching mission, which was commenced by George Whitefield in

* *J. Wesley*, Overton, 69; *Journal*, III, 111, 113, 343, 408; IV, 234; *John Wesley*, F. Hockin, 128.

Gloucester and Bristol and London; and which, when he went out to Georgia to take John Wesley's place, was continued and extended by the latter with the assistance of his brother Charles, who was the originator of the methodistic manner of life. John was thirty-five years old when he started as an itinerating missioner, and the record of his accomplishment during the fifty-one years of his activity is utterly amazing, for he covered over 250,000 miles, chiefly on horseback—until in his old age he was persuaded to drive in a chaise; and he preached more than 40,000 sermons, visiting again and again almost every part of England and Wales, besides many towns in Scotland and Ireland.

His success at once necessitated the banding together into a "Society" of those persons in any place whose hearts had been stirred, a Society being defined as "A company of men having the form and seeking the power of godliness, united in order to pray together, to receive the word of exhortation, and to watch over one another in love, that they may help each other to work out their salvation." The members were to attend the regular services in their parish church, and Wesley was very emphatic on the necessity for frequent Communion—"Let every one who has either any desire to please God, or any love of his own soul, obey God and consult the good of his own soul by communicating every time he can"; but, in addition, they were to have in their preaching-houses their own services and sermons, which were not to be allowed to clash with the times of the Church services. He had this commendation concerning Port Isaac:—"In examining this Society I found much reason to bless God on their behalf. They diligently observe all the Rules of the Society, with or without a preacher. They constantly attend the Church and Sacrament, and meet together at the times appointed." He was very strict in enjoining the proviso about not interfering with the time-table of the Church, and was scrupulous about it himself, his usual hours for preaching being 5 a.m., 8 a.m., 1 p.m., and 5 p.m. These Societies formed the backbone of his system, but he extended it by starting the Classes, each Class meeting weekly under its Leader, and each group of Societies formed

a Circuit with Quarterly Meetings held at some convenient centre. Other features of organization were Love-feasts—very simple devotional meals held each quarter ; and Watch-nights, at first held monthly on the Friday nearest the full moon, and afterwards annually on New Year's Eve.*

The qualification for membership was simple indeed. On the occasion of his last visit to St Ives, he expounded, as he had before done elsewhere, the principles of Methodism, how, more than any other Christian society, it builds on a broad foundation, for it "requires of its members no conformity either in opinions or modes of worship, but barely this one thing, to fear God and work righteousness." At Launceston he declared that Perfection is "the peculiar doctrine committed to our trust," and that the work of God does not prosper unless preachers "urge the believers to go on unto perfection, and to expect it every moment." On another occasion he stated that "our main doctrines, which include all the rest, are three : that of repentance, of faith, and of holiness" ; but, more technically, it would be correct to define justification by faith as the fundamental tenet on which all his teaching was based.†

The south-west corner of England was one of the districts dearest to John Wesley's heart and most favoured by him in his itinerant work, and by the south-west corner we do not mean the diocese of Exeter, but only Cornwall, or rather the western part of that county. The initial visit was paid by Charles Wesley in 1743, as they were given to understand that "abundance of those who before neither feared God nor regarded man had begun to enquire what they must do to be saved" ; and, after that, John Wesley made as many as thirty-one tours in Cornwall, generally choosing the late summer, and spending times of very various lengths, extending sometimes to six weeks or even two months.

Naturally, when he visited Cornwall, he had to pass through Devonshire, both going and returning—except on one occasion when he arrived by ship in Mount's Bay—

* *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, LX, 303 ; *J. Wesley*, Overton, 86, 121, 124 ; *Journal*, III, 15.

† *J. Wesley*, Overton, 71, 76 ; *Journal*, IV, 83, 469.

and his zeal prompted him to preach there too, or he recognised it as his duty to visit the Societies which had sprung into being; but the Devonshire work was for long a mere *parergon*, until "a great door and effectual" seemed to be opened to him at Plymouth and Devonport (then known as Plymouth Dock). In those places he had considerable, though not very great, success, but nowhere was he able to gather together the multitudes as he did in Cornwall; nor, indeed, was he enamoured of the Devonians, not only finding them difficult to rouse, but readily noticing their foibles and limitations. At Tavistock the people, though they crowded the preaching-house in a quarter of an hour, when he arrived there unexpectedly, "were so poor as I have not seen before for twice seven years." At Ashburton, where he preached in the street one Sunday evening, "many behaved with decency, but the rest with such stupid rudeness as I have not seen for a long time in any part of England." Of the Axminster folk, with whom he joined in a love-feast, he noted that he had "never seen a more unpolished people than these"; though he was so kind as to add by way of qualification, "but love supplies all defects." The Plymouthians, to whom he preached on the quay, were worse still:—"I wondered at the exquisite stupidity of the hearers, particularly the soldiers, who seemed to understand no more of the matter than so many oxen." *

Wesley's efforts did not usually prosper in Cathedral cities, and Exeter was no exception in this respect. Long before he commenced his itinerant tours in the west, he received a chilling rebuff there. After preaching by invitation in St Mary Major's Church one Sunday morning in 1739, he was informed by Dr Wright, the rector, that he must not occupy the pulpit in the afternoon; for, though what he said was all true and all in accordance with the teaching of the Church of England, "it is not guarded; it is dangerous; it may lead people into enthusiasm or despair." When he began his Exeter mission, the first start seemed to be full of promise. On a Sunday in August 1743 he preached at seven to a handful of people; he then attended the Church

* *Journal*, I, 421; III, 263; IV, 85, 86, 470.

services (apparently in the Cathedral), in the morning hearing a sermon that was "quite innocent of meaning," but "what that in the afternoon was, I know not, for I could not hear a single sentence"; and afterwards he went to the Castle and preached to an immense gathering, which was even thought by some to comprise half the adults of the city. "It was an awful sight," he wrote: "so vast a congregation in that solemn amphitheatre! And all silent and still, while I explained at large and enforced that glorious truth, 'Happy are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.'" But this promising start was followed by disappointment, for the Exeter Society did not flourish, and no more do we read of crowds coming to listen. Wesley himself seems to have understood that the atmosphere of the place was not suited to him; for in the majority of cases he avoided the city, his more usual course from Bristol to Cornwall being by way of Tiverton and Launceston, and his return journey by Plymouth and Okehampton to Cullompton and Tiverton, and so back to Taunton. In his latter years he was more attentive to Exeter, but his comment in 1780 was to the effect that "it is still a day of small things here for want of a convenient preaching-house." Two years afterwards an unhappy schism hampered the work; and, though later he was able to report that "this Society increases both in number and strength," on his final visit he had to record sorrowfully that "many of the people were scattered, and the rest faint and dead enough. The preaching-house was swiftly running to ruin, the rain running through the roof into it amain." We have referred already to his receiving the Communion in the Cathedral with his "old opponent" Bishop Lavington only a fortnight before the latter's death; and twenty years later (in 1782) the aged evangelist was the recipient of a graceful attention from another prelate, John Ross, after the Sunday morning service in the Cathedral. "The Bishop inviting me to dinner, I could not but observe, 1. The lovely situation of the palace, covered with trees, and as rural and retired as if it was quite in the country. 2. The plainness of the furniture, not costly or showy, but just fit for a Christian Bishop. 3. The dinner, sufficient,

but not redundant; plain and good, but not delicate. 4. The propriety of the company—five clergymen and four of the Aldermen; and, 5. The genuine, unaffected courtesy of the Bishop, who, I hope, will be a blessing to his whole diocese." *

Then, as now, the chief centre of population in the diocese was Plymouth and its environs. For several years Wesley did not include it in his rounds; but, when he had once broken ground there, he seldom passed it over when he visited the west. It was a place that caused him much anxiety, especially Devonport, for the people were quarrelsome and unstable, and, though it had its "ups" as well as its "downs," the latter decidedly predominated. Here are three entries concerning Devonport in his *Journal*, separated by intervals of a few years. (1) "Of those whom I joined several years ago, hardly one remained. Such is the fruit of disputing! And yet the congregation are more numerous than ever, and as deeply attentive as any in the Kingdom." (2) "I had but a melancholy prospect here, finding most of the people dead as stones; and when I took an account of the society, only 34 out of 70 were left." As a result of his visit, however, the number was almost raised to its previous level. (3) "The Society at the Dock had been for some time in a miserable condition. Disputes had run high." Later he received an urgent summons from the Preachers, Stewards, and Leaders, begging him to come down to deal with a serious trouble—the secession of some forty members, who had set themselves up as a rival body. Wesley made a special journey, but was not able to effect anything. However, after that matters improved, and he could note that "the Society at Plymouth Dock is in a more flourishing state than ever"; while at Plymouth "the Society doubled since I was here before, and they are both more loving than they were then, and more earnest to save their souls." At the latter place he preached at five in the morning, and "many attended, although it rained sharply"; and at an evening service at the former "the throng was so great that it was impossible for me to get through them to the pulpit; so at length they

* *Journal*, I, 250, 428; III, 111; IV, 190, 234, 399, 470.

made shift to lift me over the seats." Happy indeed was the review of his final visit :—" The jars both here (Plymouth) and at the Dock seem now to be over, and the contending parties are willing to live in peace." *

As for the rest of Devon we hear of no Societies in the northern part of the county, nor does Wesley seem to have preached anywhere else on the south coast. Ottery, Uffculme, Halberton, Bampton, Crediton, Lifton, Sticklepath, all received visits ; also North Molton, where his adherents had to suffer persecution, for " a neighbouring gentleman has threatened them much unless they will leave this way, has turned many out of their work or farms, and headed the mob in person." North Tawton was tried, but the rector and several gentlemen brought a huntsman and hounds, and foiled his attempt to preach. Still there were two other places that he visited regularly, where he accomplished a great work—Tiverton and Cullompton. At the latter he had the curious experience of listening in church on a Sunday morning to a reading in place of a sermon, the book selected being Bishop Lavington's great attack on his movement—*The Enthusiasm of Methodists and Papists compared.* The long-suffering listener, however, triumphantly remarks in his *Journal,* " But it did not lessen the congregation at one ; on whom I enforced (what they were somewhat more concerned in), ' What shall it profit a man ' to ' gain the whole world, and lose his own soul ? ' " †

But Cornwall was the county that was dear to him, for he admired and loved the Cornish people, and again and again he gives expression to his appreciation of their sterling qualities. " How tender are the hearts of this people ! Such is the advantage of true Christian simplicity." Or in another place—we quote from his *Journal*—" I admire the depth of grace in the generality of this people ; so simple, so humble, so teachable, so serious, so utterly dead to the world ! " With him seriousness meant reality or genuineness, and it was a mark of highest praise when he wrote that he

* *Journal,* II, 428 ; III, 22, 236 ; IV, 296, 360, 470.
† *Journal,* II, 240, 345 ; III, 233.

found the congregation at St Ives "very serious," and that "such are all the congregations in the county of Cornwall." *

In his early days Wesley used to commence his Cornish tour with the extreme north of the county, and year after year he found a group of churches there open to him—St Gennys, Week St Mary, Laneast, Tresmere, and Tamerton, some of the incumbents being very well disposed towards him, especially the rectors of the two first named places. But after a while he found it more profitable to leave these places out, and to shape his course directly from Launceston to Camelford, going on thence to Port Isaac, St Agnes, Redruth, and St Ives. Certainly the active opposition that he met with in West Cornwall was more determined and more violent than what he experienced in Devonshire or in the east of the county, but his victory there was more complete. He was the victim of savage and furious attacks at St Ives, Redruth, Helston, and Falmouth, sometimes the object of foul abuse and fierce invective, sometimes the target for mud and other missiles, sometimes wounded and even in actual danger of being slain; but his calm courage and ready tact prevailed, and at his revisits he found that the hostility had vanished or was vanishing away. Falmouth was the place of greatest peril, but some years afterwards he wrote, "all is quiet from one end to the other." Of Redruth he reported, "so is the roughest become one of the quietest towns in England"; and thankfully indeed he must have contemplated the contrast as he preached in the streets to "thousands upon thousands," or when on another occasion he recalled how on a Sunday "between one and two I preached in the market-place at Redruth to the largest congregation I ever saw there; they not only filled all the windows, but sat on the tops of the houses." In early days a clergyman in St Ives Church "vehemently declaimed against the new sect as enemies of the Church, Jacobites, Papists, and what not"; but, when a few years had passed, Wesley with the Mayor's permission addressed a vast concourse in the market-place, "very few of the adult inhabitants of the town being wanting." "This," he remarked later, "was the place where

* *Journal*, III, 112, 235; IV, 398.

Satan fought fiercely for his kingdom, but now all is peace." At Helston he was specially successful with the educated class, "for almost all the gentry of the town were present, and heard with the deepest attention." *

Most of the towns of Cornwall came under his sway—Bodmin, Liskeard, St Austell, Truro, Wadebridge, Mevagissey—but Penwith and the Redruth district were more than all others the chief scenes of his activity, immense crowds gathering around him at Penzance, where he spoke in the Town-hall or from the balcony of a house in the main street; at Newlyn, a "huge multitude" assembling to hear him; at Mousehole, "where there is now one of the liveliest Societies in Cornwall"; and at Sennen, his sermon being announced for five in the morning, but many arrived soon after three, so "between four and five we began praising God." In the extreme west he visited St Ives 45 times and St Just 33; and he was frequently at Morvah and Zennor, Gulval and Ludgvan, Marazion and St Hilary Downs, and many another village or spot in the open country. He even crossed over to the Scilly Islands, making the voyage in an open boat from St Ives; and, as the incumbent was not willing to let him use the church at Hugh Town, he preached in the street to almost all the inhabitants of the place.

Because of its position and population—being in the midst of the mining district—Redruth was a sort of headquarters of his activities, and the people always flocked to hear him at Camborne and Carn Brae, Crowan and St Wendron, St Stythians and Treworgey, Mudros and Illogan. But higher than all other places in Cornwall, perhaps even in England, with which his name will ever be associated because of his immense success, must be ranked Gwennap Pit, or, as he always named it, Gwennap Amphitheatre, which is situated about a mile and a half from Redruth near the Falmouth road. Wesley had several times preached close by, and it was evidently a very popular site, for we read that on one occasion his congregation numbered about ten thousand; and next morning, when he was to preach there again at five o'clock, he was awakened between three and four by a crowd of

* *Journal*, I, 461; II, 205, 345; III, 21, 112, 235; IV, 319, 398.

miners, who, fearing they might be too late, had gathered round the house, and were singing and praising God. But, one day in 1762, the wind was so tempestuous, that preacher and audience were fain to seek shelter in the amphitheatre, which is a huge excavation in the side of Carn Marth. This great area would easily hold twenty thousand persons, and it often did, for henceforth Wesley generally included it in the itinerary of his Cornish tours. When, however, the congregation numbered (according to his computation) thirty-two, thirty-four, and even thirty-five thousand, they had to overflow on to the higher ground around the edge of this enormous pit; but so marvellous were the oratorical powers of this prince of preachers, that all were able to hear his sermons quite well. When we bear in mind that the seating accommodation of the Royal Albert Hall in London is only ten thousand, and that speakers there in a covered space experience considerable difficulty in making themselves heard, it is certainly wonderful that this aged man (he was eighty-four when he addressed the largest of all those assemblies) should have been quite audible to so many in the open air. Those services, held in Gwennap Pit at the early hour of five, must have been exceedingly impressive events, whether considered from the mere effect of numbers, or from the sentimental, or the religious standpoint; and it is but natural that Wesley himself should have been deeply moved thereby. "I think," he wrote, "this is the most magnificent spectacle which is to be seen on this side of heaven. And no music is to be heard upon earth comparable to the sound of many thousand voices, when they are all harmoniously joined together, singing praises to God and the Lamb." *

It was not only his vocal power that was extraordinary, but also his great physical strength and endurance. This is made quite manifest when we examine his journeyings. For instance, he preached one Sunday morning at five at Gwennap, at eight at St Stythians some three miles away to a congregation of some thousands, and at five again at Gwennap; next day he rode forty-five miles and preached at Laneast at the other end of the county; on the Tuesday

* *Journal*, I, 431, 432, 434; III, 112; IV, 154.

he preached at Trewen at five, and after a very rough ride of thirty-five miles preached at Sticklepath far away in Devonshire; and the following day he rode on forty-five miles through Crediton to Minehead in Somerest. Another tour he closed with a sermon at Devonport at four in the morning; a three hours' ride to Tavistock, where he preached again; he rested an hour at Okehampton, arrived after sunset at Crediton; then on in rain and darkness to Cullompton, which he reached at about ten, having covered sixty-two miles; and next day he rode nearly twenty miles in time to preach at Taunton at eleven. When he was sixty-six years old, he started out from Launceston one morning in rain that lasted till he reached Truro, halting *en route* at Bodmin to preach in the Town-hall, and by means of three relays of horses was able to accomplish nearly seventy miles, making St John's near Helston in time to preach at six in the evening. Again, when he was an old man of seventy-eight, he addressed twenty-two thousand in Gwennap Pit one Sunday evening, and at noon on the following Wednesday preached in Taunton, a hundred and thirty miles away by carriage drive, having stopped on the way to deliver sermons at Bodmin, Launceston, Tiverton, and Halberton. Personal interviews and meetings of Societies are not reckoned in these computations, and we are besides informed that he did much study whilst he travelled, being able to read on horseback, and having a book-shelf fitting in his carriage.*

His religious influence was exercised most successfully among the working classes, and especially the men, with whom he had closer sympathy than with the women, though he had very great power over both. With children he was a failure, though he recognised the enormous importance of getting hold of them. But he was quite unable to understand child nature, as was painfully evident by his scheme for a school at Kingswood by Bristol for the children of his preachers and other Methodists. He planned it all most carefully, and devoted much anxious care and immense pains to make it succeed, and its ultimate failure—its continuous survival for a number of years is almost a miracle—was one of the

* *Journal*, I, 463; II, 118; III, 377; IV, 216.

bitterest disappointments of his whole career. All the children were to be boarders, and were to enter between the ages of six and twelve, the curriculum comprising reading, writing, arithmetic, algebra, geometry, history, chronology, geography, rhetoric, logic, ethics, physics, music, English, French, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. They were to rise every morning at four, and spend an hour in private reading, meditation, singing, and prayer. Sundays were to be devoted to religious exercises, including attendance at the parish church. On Fridays they were to fast until three in the afternoon. There were to be no holidays, and all play was strictly forbidden, for "he, who plays when he is a child, will play when he becomes a man." No child was to be admitted unless the parents agreed to the observance of these regulations, and they were never to take him away for a single day so long as he was a member of the school. No wonder that a man whose ideas of childhood were so absurdly unpractical, failed to effect anything with the children of West Cornwall.*

But with the grown-ups his influence was most potent—potent not only in arousing their dormant religious fervour and inducing them to live in closer communion with God, for his exhortations were splendidly efficacious in reforming their whole code of ethics. The Cornish have for ages indulged in smuggling, but Wesley would have none of that among his followers; and so strongly and so eloquently did he insist on this, declaring that the practice was wrong in the sight of God and also amounted to stealing from the King, that they gave up buying or selling goods on which no duty had been paid.† Years afterwards he could write with pardonable pride:—"That detestable practice of cheating the King is no more found in our Societies. And since that accursed thing has been put away, the work of God has everywhere increased." Again, Cornwall was notorious for its "rotten boroughs," for it returned forty-four representatives to the House of Commons (two for the county, and two each for twenty-one boroughs), which was many more than those of any other county in the United Kingdom,

* *J. Wesley*, Overton, 135.

† *Journal*, II, 62; III, 113.

and as a consequence bribery was rife. Wesley tackled this evil at St Ives, and overcame it. Thus he wrote in 1747 :— "I spoke severally to all those who had votes in the ensuing election. I found them such as I desired. Not one would eat or drink at the expense of him for whom he voted. Five guineas had been given to W. C., but he returned them immediately. T. M. positively refused to accept anything ; and, when he heard that his mother had received money privately, he could not rest until she gave him the three guineas, which he instantly sent back."

The attitude of the gentry was at first one of haughty superiority. They regarded Wesley much in the same way as the early Salvation Army preachers were regarded in after times, and not a few tried repression and even persecution. But in his case they had to deal with one who was not only bold and fearless as a Christian preacher, but was also an educated gentleman, an Oxford man and a Fellow of his College ; and so patent were his charitable Christianity and his generous courtesy in dealing with others, even with opponents, that their opposition was disarmed, and those who were not won over to become his friends, at least ceased to be his foes.

Most to be regretted was the attitude of the clergy. If only they could have stood by his side and supported him, the tremendous revival that he wrought for Christianity in England would have been even deeper and stronger as effected through the Church instead of without the Church. But the clergy generally stood aloof, and in some cases even did their utmost to thwart and hinder his efforts ; so that Wesley went on his way in disregard of them, save only for the few who threw themselves into the movement by actually becoming his assistant ministers. Devon and Cornwall were not exceptional in this respect. In the former almost the only recorded acts of friendliness or encouragement were Bishop Ross's courteous invitation, and a similar extension of hospitality from Dr Robert Hawker, Vicar of Charles' Church at Plymouth. The only churches open to him in the diocese were a group of five in remote country parishes in north Cornwall ; and, with the further exception of sermons preached on his behalf by the Vicar of St Cubert and an

occasional remonstrance with his turbulent persecutors, uttered by some chance clergyman, he seems to have been left to stand alone in that county also.*

Yet for this we can scarcely blame the clergy. When so eminent a defender of the Faith as Bishop Butler of Bristol had found himself obliged to condemn Wesley for setting at defiance the Church's regulations as to jurisdiction and the laws of ecclesiastical usage, and when all the bishops on the bench were fulminating against his proceedings in their episcopal charges, we can hardly be surprised that incumbents resented as an intrusion a preaching mission conducted in their parishes by a stranger, who held no commission from the Diocesan and had not asked permission from themselves. It may be that the circumstances and conditions of that age would not permit of a *concordat;* but it is greatly to be regretted that John Wesley, whose Church principles were so strong, allowed himself to be rushed, against his better judgment, into taking up the work that Whitefield had begun; instead of first exercising his splendid abilities and persuasive powers in an endeavour to gain the sanction and support of the Church authorities for the noble enterprise for which he was so pre-eminently suited. Of course Wesley never intended to create a schism, nor did he even contemplate its possibility in his early days; and when afterwards he recognised that the course he was following must inevitably lead to that, it was too late to turn back, and even he, though in matters of government wielding absolute power—as of a Pope of Rome without a College of Cardinals—was unable to order events otherwise. He could only utter his warning, and declare his personal allegiance to the Church of England; and this he did a few months before his death by writing these carefully weighed words in his official organ, the *Arminian Magazine*:—"I never had any design of separating from the Church; I have no such design now; I do not believe the Methodists in general design it. I do, and will do, all in my power to prevent such an event; nevertheless in spite of all I can do, many will separate from it, although

* *Journal*, I, 498, 505, 506; II, 65; III, 21; IV, 234, 360.

I am inclined to think not one half nor perhaps a third of them. These will be so bold and injudicious as to form a separate party, which consequently will dwindle into a dry, dull, separate sect. In flat opposition to them, I declare, once more, that I live and die a member of the Church of England, and that none who regard my judgment will ever separate from it." *

* *J. Wesley*, Overton, 97, 98, 212.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE VICTORIAN AGE.

THE origin of Bishop Phillpotts was not so humble as has been commonly represented, since his family for two centuries held an estate at Langarren in Herefordshire; though it is evident that they had to bend beneath evil fortune, for John, the Bishop's father, sold his patrimony, and took up the business of the making of bricks and pottery at Bridgwater in Somerset. It was there that his second son, the future Bishop, was born; but while the boy was still very young, his father removed to Gloucester, where he owned and managed the Bell Inn, a later appointment as land agent to the Cathedral Chapter assisting him to support his numerous family of fifteen children, the eldest of whom afterwards became Member of Parliament for that city. From Gloucester College School the young Henry passed on as a child scholar of thirteen to Corpus Christi College at Oxford, and graduated when he had just passed his seventeenth birthday. A fellowship at Magdalen followed at once, and there for nine years he was moulded under the influence of President Routh, an influence that led him to seek Holy Orders, and was a decisive factor in forming his theological and ecclesiastical opinions. His marriage with a niece of Lady Eldon aided him along the road to promotion; but it was chiefly his innate ability and the prudent and courageous exercise of his powers—especially the power of his pen—that pushed him on from one lucrative post to another, until in 1830 he was invited to pass from the deanery of Chester to the see of Exeter.

Now however he found himself in a difficult position, and to the world he figured far from favourably in many eyes. There was ample precedent for his contention that, as the income of his future bishopric was only £2,700, he should

be allowed to retain *in commendam* the rectory of Stanhope in the county of Durham, which he had held for ten years, and whose value varied from £4,000 to £7,000; and the reasonableness of this was granted by the Tory Government, whose cause he had championed with consummate skill as a political pamphleteer. But just then a change of ministry brought into office Lord Grey, who had often been the target of Phillpotts's literary shafts. Strong opposition, too, was aroused at Stanhope, where his parishioners complained of having been neglected; so the new Government refused to sanction the arrangement made by their predecessors. However, a compromise was effected—a canon of Durham was appointed to Stanhope, and Phillpotts was given his vacant stall (which was worth some thousands); and he held that stall for the rest of his life, regularly going into residence in his turn.

It was unfortunate for the new Bishop that he should be looked at askance by his clergy, when he arrived in his diocese in January 1831. There were several reasons for their distrust and suspicion. The fact that he was prominent as a Tory controversialist would probably be regarded indulgently; but his High Church views were unpopular, his ecclesiastical career savoured of a persistent and successful seeking for lucre, and he was openly accused of having been a political turncoat in order to gain preferment by changing over to support Catholic Emancipation. Such was the prevalent opinion about him: the real man may easily be discerned.

His character was without blemish—none of his many enemies had any charge to bring against his life, his morals, his code of ethics. But his conduct had features of which several were open to criticism, and even to condemnation; and these were so prominent and well-defined that they were part of the man himself, marking him out as quite different from his contemporaries and successors. There was in him none of the quiet reserve of William Howley and Walter Kerr Hamilton, nor of the winning and persuasive personalities of Samuel Wilberforce and Archibald Campbell Tait. By his irresistible logic and

dialectical skill he silenced his opponents, and by his merciless and biting invective he browbeat and terrified them; but he left them irritated and confirmed in their opposition—instead of convincing them, as did his successor by the transparent honesty of his conviction and the charm of his rugged humility. He was a born fighter, who delighted in a fray, wielding his pen against Roman Catholic writers, attacking Radical leaders both in and out of Parliament, and crushing his irregular or heretical clergy by the power of the Law Courts; but if he had rather evinced some of the devotional spirituality of Christopher Wordsworth or Edward Henry Bickersteth or Edward King, his biographers would not have felt inclined to question whether, with all his splendid abilities, the cause which he championed so manfully was not weakened instead of strengthened by his life's history.

But those abilities were helpful in their application to the Church's needs, for he was so clear-sighted as to discern accurately what was wanted for the perfecting of the Church's machinery, and sufficiently strong to carry through his schemes, or at least to prepare the way for their accomplishment. Most important of these wants was the dividing of his lengthy and unwieldy diocese by the revival of the ancient Cornish see. To this idea he gave prominence in his Charge of 1842, offering to surrender £1,000 of his official income towards its endowment, and selecting Kenwyn Rectory as the most suitable residence for the future bishop—a wise choice, which was approved when his scheme was carried into effect by his successor. His wisdom was further manifested by his successful effort to retain a fifth canonry at Exeter in order that its emoluments might in due course be transferred to Truro (as was afterwards done); and he generously bequeathed most of his books to the clergy of Cornwall, the collection, preserved in the Cathedral city, being still designated "the Phillpotts Library." At the present day, accustomed as we are to the subject of the extension of the episcopate, it is not easy for us to recognise the novelty and the boldness of his proposal; but we must remember that at that time the only example of the foundation of a

new see since the reign of Henry VIII was Ripon (in 1836), and that this involved no increase in the number of bishops, for it was accomplished by the uniting of the dioceses of Gloucester and Bristol.

Under him another phase of Church extension took the form of the providing of more churches for the rapidly increasing population of the Three Towns, which in 1841 amounted to 80,061, and for whose use there were only four parish churches—St Andrew's and Charles' for Plymouth, St George's for Stonehouse, and Stoke Damarel for Devonport—and St Andrew's Chapel (now St Catharine's Church), which was built in 1822 as a chapel-of-ease to St Andrew's. In order to supply the need Sir Robert Peel's New Parishes Act was passed in 1843, with the splendid result of the founding of nine new parishes in seven years, each with its own church, the buildings being known as the "Peel Churches." Four of these were split off from Plymouth—St John's, Sutton-on-Plym (1844), St James-the-Less (1847), Christ Church (1847), and Holy Trinity (1851); one was formed from parts of Plymouth and Stonehouse—St Peter's (1847); and four were offshoots of Stoke Damarel—St James-the-Great, St Mary's, St Paul's, and St Stephen's (all in 1847). St Peter's had a curious and interesting origin. Exception was taken against the orthodoxy of the Reverend John Hawker, Vicar of Charles' Church, and there was consequently a schism in the congregation, many of whom built a place of worship in the middle of what is now Wyndham Square, and there Mr Hawker used to preach; but as his prophesying was thus apart from the tabernacle, he was regarded as an Eldad (*Numbers*, XI, 26), and the building was commonly known as Eldad Chapel. His chapel was afterwards replaced by the present St Peter's Church; but the name Eldad still clings to that district.

Plymouth was by no means unique in respect to progress, for throughout the diocese a great movement was fostered in favour of Church extension. Bishop Phillpotts found Torquay consisting of one parish only, and he lived to see the formation of St Mary Magdalene's, Upton (1848), St Mark's, Torwood (1855), St John's (1861), and Christ Church,

Ellacombe (1868), and that of St Luke's was accomplished a few days after his death: besides which Babbacombe was separated from St Mary Church (1868). In the growing township of Barnstaple there were formed three new parishes—St Mary Magdalene's (1844), Holy Trinity (1846), and Newport (1847). St James's, Exeter, was taken from the mother-parish of St Sidwell's (1838); St Paul's, West Exe, from Tiverton (1856); St Philip and St James's from Ilfracombe (1859); St Paul's, Gulworthy, from Tavistock (1858); and St Luke's, Countess Wear, from Topsham (1844). Other new parishes were Ivybridge (1836), Tipton St John (1841), Appledore, Dunkeswell Abbey, Escot, and Salcombe (all in 1844), Woodbury Salterton (1845), Landscove (1852), Hooe and Revelstoke (1856), Harbertonford (1860), Bucks Mills and Newton Poppleford (1862), Chittlehamholt and West Hill (1863), Cofton, Collaton St Mary, and Leusdon (1864), Luton (1866), Horrabridge (1867), and Lee St Matthew (1869). This shows a total of 44 new parishes in Devon, and the Cornish record is comparatively a still more remarkable achievement, *viz.*, the foundation of 33—an aggregate of 77 for the whole diocese. The latter are Bude and St Day (1835), Chacewater (1837), Flushing, Lannarth, and Tuckingmill (1844), Godolphin, Looe, Pendeen, and Porthleven (1845), Bolventor, Carnmenellis, Halsetown, Mithian, Mount Hawke, Penponds, Treleigh, Treslothan, and St George's, Truro (1846), Baldhu and Treverbyn (1847), Newlyn St Peter's and Penwerris (1848), Charlestown and Par (1849), Herodsfoot (1851), Hessenford and Tideford (1852), St John's and St Paul's, Truro (1865), St Paul's, Penzance (1867), and Millbrook (1869).

Such schemes he was ever ready to promote and encourage by weighty speeches or letters, and also by generous subscriptions; and, besides the providing of new parishes with places of worship, and the rebuilding of churches at Heavitree, Twitchen, and St Leonard's, Exeter, and of Petton Chapel near Bampton, he was happy in being able to foster the erection of Bedford Chapel (1832) and St Mary Magdalene's (1861) and St Michael and All Angels' (1868) at Exeter; and chapels in or near Plymouth—Crown Hill for St Budeaux (1843),

Oreston for Plymstock (1858), and that of the Good Shepherd for St Peter's (1863). Church extension gave to the country town of Tavistock Fitzford Church (1867), to Newton Abbot St Leonard's Church (1836) and St Paul's Church (1859), to Honiton St Paul's Church (1849), to Dawlish St Mark's Church (1850) and Holcombe Chapel (1867), to South Molton a chapel at Clapworthy Mill (1860), and to Modbury St Mary's Chapel at Brownstone (1844). In the heart of Dartmoor a church was built at Princetown in 1864 and dedicated to St Michael, the outlying hamlet of Huccaby obtaining its Chapel of St Raphael four years later, and Postbridge that of St Gabriel in the following year. Harracott being far from the mother-church of Tawstock, a chapel was consecrated there in 1846, and similarly the Church of the Holy Trinity for the growing township of Bere Alstone in 1848, and Christ Church in 1857 for the people of Brent Tor, whose ancient shrine of St Michael is very difficult of access, perched on the narrow summit of an extinct volcano at the height of 1,130 feet above sea-level.

During the closing years of his episcopate, mission chapels were erected at Pinhoe, at Muddiford in Marwood, and at Exton in Woodbury ; and more ambitious edifices at Travellers' Rest in a remote part of Swymbridge, at Galmpton in South Huish, at Cowley by Exe Bridge, and—most stately of all—the church of St Peter at Sidford in the parish of Sidbury.

In another branch of valuable Church work Bishop Phillpotts showed himself to be very much in advance of his generation, *viz.*, the providing of Theological Colleges. The oldest of these, Chichester and Wells, date only from 1839 and 1840 ; but in the first of his episcopal Charges—that of 1833—he skilfully and wisely sketched out what he considered to be needed :—" To append to the Chapter an institution in the nature of a School of Theology, at which candidates for Orders might be required to reside during one or two years after they have left the University and immediately before their ordination, thus acquiring the knowledge necessary for their holy vocation and giving testimony of their fitness for it by their previous conduct

under the immediate eye of the bishop, or of those who are best able to judge and to report on it to him."

Such a scheme he himself carried into execution later by starting a Theological College in Exeter under the principalship of the Dean, Dr Ellicott, who, on becoming Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, was succeeded by Canon Harold Browne, until his elevation to the see of Ely. No collegiate buildings were erected, and the students, who were lodged in the city, were so few in number that the undertaking came to an end in 1867 after a six years' trial. The funds were generously supplied by the Bishop, and of the source from which he derived them an account is given that greatly redounds to his honour. For many generations the Bishops of Exeter, ever since the episcopate of Thomas Lamplugh, had held *in commendam* the benefice of Shobrooke, leaving the duties to be performed by a curate-in-charge; but when the Bishop's secretary, Mr Ralph Barnes, set forth to him that he had no right to it, he calculated the total amount that he had received from Shobrooke during his tenure, *viz.*, £12,000, and assigned the use of that sum together with £2,000 interest for the expenses of the College. Consequently, after his death, his executors paid over to the Dean and Chapter as trustees the sum of £11,204, and with the consent of the Charity Commissioners the interest has since 1878 been utilized as "Phillpotts Studentships" in the form of post-graduate scholarships of £50 each, tenable for one or two years at Oxford or Cambridge, each Student being directed in his theological studies by one of the Divinity Professors and gaining parochial experience under one of the incumbents, and pledging himself to be ordained for two years' work in the diocese of Exeter or Truro. The episcopal absentee rectors of Shobrooke had performed no ministrations in that parish, but Bishop Phillpotts made all possible amends by graciously appointing as his successor the Reverend Robert A. Knox, who had been his deputy there as curate-in-charge.*

There were many indications of sound Church principles and polity in his efforts and his exhortations. He set his

* *Memoirs of Abp. Temple*, I, 410.

face against certain prevalent ecclesiastical abuses—the non-residence of incumbents, the holding of benefices in plurality, the permitting of a deacon to act as curate-in-charge of a parish; and his peremptory command to absentees, "reside or resign," was famous long after his day. He would have a celebration of the Holy Communion every month in each parish, and wished a collection to be taken every time; though, if the people were seriously perturbed thereby, he advised the collection to be less frequent, until they had been educated up to that standard; and sometimes the alms ought to be devoted to extra-parochial objects, the cause of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel being strongly pressed. He advocated a compulsory life-insurance for the clergy, the payment of the premium being secured on the benefice, and the sum being not less than one or two years' income of the living, according to its value; the first lien on the sum so insured should meet the charges of dilapidations, the remainder reverting to the executors. Clerical stipends ought to be increased, and he applied this recommendation to include the stipends of bishops, so as to free them from the need of holding *commendams* and seeking translations—unfortunate results, which he rejoiced to see remedied by the equalizing of episcopal incomes. He desiderated the conferring on bishops of power to refuse to institute incumbents who were physically incompetent to perform their duties—he was able to quote scandalous cases of men who because of paralysis or other maladies were utterly incapable, and took benefices for purely mercenary motives, but who could not be rejected, as they were declared to be mentally sound. He was so advanced and so enlightened as to give expression to a desire, even as early as 1842, for the restoration to the Church of the right to exercise her powers by Synods and Convocations; and on one occasion he summoned the Greater Chapter of his Cathedral to meet him in council and to advise him in a matter of diocesan difficulty, *viz.*, "diversity of practice in the worship of Almighty God." *

To us of this generation his churchmanship seems strangely anomalous and inconsistent. On the whole, we may describe

* *Charges of* 1833, 1836, 1842; *Letters to the Clergy*, 1843, 1844.

him as—for that age—a very High Churchman as regards doctrines, but suspicious of and even opposed to practices, which used to be regarded as advanced, though now adopted by very many; and such he denounced—as was his wont—in scathing terms. Thus, while loyally accepting in their fulness all that the Prayer Book teaches concerning the Church and Baptismal Regeneration and the Real Spiritual Presence in the Holy Communion, and urging obedience to the directions of the rubrics, he stigmatized praying for the dead as a "dangerous practice," "a practice repudiated by the Church of England herself"; and even at the close of his career he strongly condemned the mixing of the chalice—a custom which he declared to have been "abandoned by our Church."

Most pronounced of all was his treatment of "Auricular Confession," on which subject Dean Lowe delivered a sermon in his Cathedral in 1852. The sermon was published, and at first the Bishop wrote to the preacher, saying that he had as yet not been able to study his copy fully, but that he heartily approved of his sweeping condemnation of that Roman practice, and that for his part he would wish that the Dean had put it even more weightily. He added an enquiry as to who were the "apish imitators of Rome," to whom he alluded in the sermon, and what were "their proceedings in this direction which have lately caused no small stir, especially in this diocese." The Dean was very much gratified by his Diocesan's commendation, but he replied that he had no direct charge to bring against any clergymen in the diocese; Mr Prynne's imposing of penance on a penitent, however, he described as very suspicious, and he declared that "some, more especially of the younger clergy, are alarming the minds of the people by an apish imitation of certain practices, which are not prescribed by our rubrics, and are regarded as Romish—such as bowings, genuflections, and intonings." The Bishop saw his opportunity, and he used it to the full, penning and publishing a lengthy letter, in which he mercilessly crushed the Dean with a weight of evidence and argument and casuistry—weapons which he loved, and which he knew so well how to wield. He not only devoted thirty-two pages to a searching and condemna-

tory criticism of the sermon, but he inveighed against the highly-placed writer for contenting himself with exposing the errors of Rome and omitting all attempt to set forth the teaching of the Church of England—an omission which the Bishop made good in his letter, for the Dean had overshot the mark by denying to our clergy all power of priestly absolution. He resented the veiled statement that some of our own clergymen are tainted by Roman errors; and, though he had himself just recently been finding fault with him, he entered upon an elaborate defence of Mr Prynne (Vicar of St Peter's, Plymouth), whom he spoke of in terms of the highest praise.*

The Tractarian movement was one which no bishop of that age could pass over in silence, but Phillpotts found it difficult to speak of it with certainty and consistency. Of course he expressed himself strongly about it, but his utterances were a strange conjunction of eulogy and malediction, for he seems in this connection to have rejected the *dictum* that "a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit." He discovered much erroneous teaching in the *Tracts for the Times*, and Tract 90 particularly he regarded as both wrong and pernicious; but at the same time he entertained a profound admiration for the writers, and by a curious contradiction he persuaded himself that their work was beneficial to the Church. "The result of their teaching has, I fully believe, been on the whole very highly useful to the cause, not only of sound learning, but also of true religion"; and he specially recognised "the stimulus which they have given to a life of systematic piety."†

There is much contained in what has been said above, which compels us to admit that the charge of partiality was justified. Bishop Phillpotts was a partizan, and he consistently and constantly made it his aim to promote men of his party. This was recognised by all, and of course was keenly and bitterly resented by the neglected and slighted Low Churchmen. These found a bold and candid spokesman

* *Charges of* 1839, 1842, 1848.

† *Charges of* 1839, 1842, 1848, 1854, 1857, 1863; *Letter to the Clergy*, 1844; *Letter on Confession and Absolution*, 1852.

in the Reverend R. W. Needham, Minister of St Paul's, Stonehouse, who thus gave expression to the grievance in a printed letter addressed to his Diocesan in 1851 :—" You have excluded the evangelical clergy from any share in the ecclesiastical appointments officially entrusted to you—no matter how long or signal their services may have been, or how high their estimation with the laity. . . . Your Lordship's discouragement of all who avow evangelical views has been so marked that, while many clergymen holding such sentiments have been glad to quit the diocese, few have been willing to enter it." *

The *Tracts for the Times* dealt rather with doctrines and the discipline and rites of the Church than with the externals of worship, and their influence in the diocese of Exeter was very marked. One indication of this is a remark by the Bishop, who notes " the favour with which many of the clergy have regarded these publications." The laity however were less affected by the revival, and their opposition to innovation was very general, though not universal. But indeed, the ritual was extremely moderate—even as late as 1851 the Bishop was able to express his belief that there was not a movable cross in any chancel in his diocese, and a few years earlier a storm of opposition had been aroused by the substituting of the surplice for the black gown in the pulpit.

Those " surplice riots " were a very noteworthy feature in the history of the diocese. The difficulty had already cropped up in London, where Bishop Blomfield in 1842 had issued orders that preachers, at least in the morning service, were to wear surplices ; but when he found how strong was the opposition, he gave way before the storm, and withdrew his injunction. Bishop Phillpotts remained firm, and refused to accede when petitioned to rescind a ruling of the same nature, which he had issued in the year 1844. It seems that a number of clergymen, whose sympathies were Tractarian, had discarded the black gown, with the natural consequence that the wearing of the surplice had been recognised as a party badge. The Bishop therefore addressed

* *The Church and the Synod*, 4, 5.

a very sensible letter to his clergy, in which he said :—" I refer to the use of the surplice in preaching, a matter so inconsiderable, that it could not, of itself, excite any strong feeling in any reasonable man. But the more unimportant it is in itself, the more manifest is the necessity of stripping it of that factitious importance which is given to it by its being made the symbol of disunion. This can be done only by requiring that there be no longer any diversity, that all either use or disuse the surplice when they preach. If there were no law, one way or the other, there might be difficulty in deciding which to require. But the law, on due investigation, is clear, however complicated may be the enquiry which is necessary to ascertain it. That law, beyond all question which can now arise, requires that the surplice be always used in the sermon which is part of the Communion Service ; and as to all other times, whenever a sermon is part of the ministration of the parochial clergy, there is so little reason for question, that I resolve the doubt, by requiring that the surplice be always used." * For a considerable while afterwards, however, the popular feelings continued to be extraordinarily agitated. The Bishop was accused of popery and priestcraft and favouring Tractarianism ; some of the deaneries refused to conform to his directions ; and at St Sidwell's, Exeter, the rioters were so threatening that the whole police force of the city had to escort the Rector (the Reverend Francis Courtenay) from the church to his house in order to guard him from personal injury.†

The Exeter diocese was a large one, for, stretching over a length of 140 miles, there were 628 benefices in the year 1833 (the present number in the two dioceses is 758), the clerical staff being nearly 800. Many of these had but few people—there were 40 parishes whose population did not exceed 100, one parish had only 29 people, and another 15. The official returns show that non-residence was very common —only 61 per cent. of the benefices had resident incumbents at that time. Most of the others had a curate-in-charge in the parish, but as many as 70 had no clergyman in residence.

* *Letter to the Clergy*, 1844, 9.

† *Charge of* 1845, 1, 24 ; *Church in England*, Overton, II, 357

This abuse Bishop Phillpotts strove to reduce to a minimum, and so successful were his efforts that three years later he was able to report that the number of resident incumbents was increased by 60, though progress was hampered by the prevalence of pluralities and by the circumstance that in many cases there was no suitable house provided. Especially admirable was the reform that he brought about in Cornwall, where the evil was greatest; and a splendid testimony to his zeal is contained in the contrast of conditions in the first year of his episcopate with those in his last:—in 1830 there were 92 incumbents non-resident, but only 12 in 1869, and the residents had increased from 89 to 211.*

The average value of livings was small, and there were few "plums"—the Bishop had none in his gift worth more than £500, and there was only one in the diocese with a net income of over £1,000. Assistant curates were declared to be better paid than those elsewhere, there being only three dioceses where stipends were higher; but still the average in 1831-2 was under £80, and in 1836 there were nearly 50 who received only £60 per annum or less, and of 30 others the maximum income was £100. In connection with the subject of clerical stipends it is interesting to notice—what has not been generally understood—how extensively the arrangement, which was made compulsory by the Tithe Commutation Act of 1836, had been already adopted by voluntary agreement; so that three years before that date Bishop Phillpotts was able to declare of his beneficed clergy, "in this great diocese there is not, I believe, more than one who takes his tithe in kind." †

During this episcopate Ordinations were held fairly regularly, averaging 2½ a year. They were almost all performed in Exeter, either in the Cathedral or in the Palace Chapel, though near the end some few took place in the Torquay churches; and, until his extreme old age, Phillpotts always conducted them in person, those of his four last years being taken by various episcopal assistants, such as Bishop

* *Bishopric of Truro*, 38.

† *Charges of* 1833, 1836, 1842; *Ordination Registers*.

Spencer of Jamaica, Bishop Chapman, who had retired from Colombo, and Bishop Trower, formerly of Glasgow and of Gibraltar. These continued to discharge his episcopal duties to the end, including his triennial Visitations; for, though he applied for and obtained parliamentary sanction for resigning his see, he expired just before his resignation took effect. His ordinands preserved a good annual average—21 deacons and 22 priests, the returns showing a very marked increase at the time of the Gorham controversy, when the fame of the Bishop prompted many to seek Orders at his hands (the deacons numbered 48, 25, 40, 33, and 30 in the five years 1849-1853). These figures do not include persons ordained by other diocesans on Letters Dimissory from Exeter, who numbered as many as 101 deacons and 39 priests during his first sixteen years, so that the diocese seems to have been sufficiently well staffed. The intellectual standard, too, was satisfactory, as judged by examination results, only 13 per cent. of the deacons and 8 per cent. of the priests being non-graduates.

Of Church work, formal or informal, what was accomplished during this period was but little, when compared with the busy activities of the present age; but, if a large number of the clergy might correctly be described as country gentlemen, who had qualified themselves to hold benefices by being ordained, yet, generally speaking, their characters were eminently respectable; and, according to their lights, they fulfilled their duty, and did not fall short of what was expected of them. But besides old-fashioned country parsons and evangelical divines of the towns, there were to be found many men who were responding to the quickening influences of the Oxford Revival; and to the appreciation of classical scholarship, which they had carried with them from the Universities, they were adding such theological learning as they could derive from the works of Pusey, Newman, Keble, Isaac Williams, and other Tractarians, as well as from those of Neale, Maskell, Wordsworth, Wheatly, and Palmer.

On the other hand there were some really bad men. We cannot charge Blackmore with exaggeration in his por-

traiture of Parson Chown and Parson Rambone in *The Maid of Sker*. Save for the fact of his Baptism, the Reverend John Froude, who for forty-seven years was Vicar of Knowstone and Molland, could hardly be described as a Christian, in any sense of the word ; and long afterwards his successor, who was a magistrate, in reviewing his life declared, " I suppose he was guilty of every crime in the calendar." Froude's nephew, the Reverend John Radford (Parson Rambone) was almost as iniquitous, and it seems well-nigh a mockery that his body should rest beneath the Christian symbol in Lapford Churchyard, even though in his old age he was wont to weep regretful tears as he preached to the clerk and his little boy and the one other man who attended his church. But these were quite exceptional cases, and though there were plenty of hunting parsons, it would be a gross injustice to mention Jack Russell of Swymbridge or any others in the same breath with Froude and Radford. True, in some of the remoter parts of the diocese the Church's ministry was not well represented—the deanery of Holsworthy was known as " the black deanery," and the Church has even now not wholly recovered from the effects of that evil time—but, as a rule, the clergy of at least the latter half of Phillpotts's episcopate were men of a fine type. A considerable number were members of county families, and there were but few who were not drawn from the ranks of the gentry, or unworthy of the designation of " gentleman " ; and present day Christianity owes much to those men, who, without the helps and encouragements and safeguards of modern civilization and ecclesiastical organization, devoted themselves to their flocks, and kept the Faith alive in town and country in this sequestered corner of England.

In defence of Sisterhoods the Bishop made a bold stand, and splendidly upheld the pioneer of the movement. In response to his urgent appeal for help on behalf of " The Spiritual Destitution Fund of Devonport and Plymouth," Miss Priscilla Lydia Sellon, daughter of a naval captain, came from the Midlands to Devonport early in 1848, and, being joined by a few other ladies, established a religious community, designated " The Society of Sisters of Mercy

of the Holy Trinity, Devonport." The chief feature of their work was an Orphans' Home for the children of deceased sailors and soldiers, which was established in Milne Place, Morice Town, with the Queen Dowager as Patroness and the Bishop as Patron and Visitor, Dr Pusey being the spiritual director of the Sisterhood. For some considerable while previously there had been ferment in the diocese owing to the introduction of what were described as popish practices, and consequently the Sisterhood was viewed with grave suspicion, and was adversely criticized with much exhibition of bigotry and rancour. Objection was taken to Miss Sellon's designation as "Lady Superior," to the Sisters' habit—a loose cloak with large and full sleeves and a coarse girdle from which was suspended a cross, to their having an "oratory" in their house with an altar and on it a large white cross and flowers, to their custom of bowing to the cross, and to their practice of having prayers seven times a day, commencing at six in the morning, the services bearing the ancient names of lauds, prime, terce, etc. All this was regarded as Romish or tending towards Romanism, and as opposed to the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England. Accusations of this tenour were published in the local press, especially in the *Devonport Telegraph*, which printed the depositions of a young woman and two girls who had recently been inmates of the Orphans' Home; and, though Miss Sellon had worked with magnificent and self-sacrificing devotion among the poor sufferers during a terrible outbreak of cholera, the Queen Dowager allowed herself to be so influenced by these attacks as to withdraw her name as Patroness of the Home.

The Bishop felt that action must be taken; so he directed the Rector of Stoke Damarel, Mr W. J. St Aubyn, in whose parish the Home was situated, to announce that he would hold a public Enquiry concerning the matter. This was arranged at the Mechanics' Institute in Devonport on February 15th, 1849, when his Lordship was attended by the Archdeacon (the Venerable R. H. Froude), his Chaplain (the Reverend E. C. Phillpotts), the Admiral of the Port (Sir William Hall Gage), and the General in Command (the

Honourable Henry Murray), the last two acting as his Assessors during an investigation that occupied more than seven hours. The interest and excitement were widespread and keen, and the attendance was large, including many of the leading men of the place, among the chief objectors being Dr Bellamy, who behaved in a violent and disorderly manner, Dr John Hatchard, Vicar of St Andrew's, and Mr H. A. Greaves, Vicar of Charles' Church. Several local clergymen were present as supporters of the Sisters—Mr G. R. Prynne, Vicar of St Peter's, Mr George Procter, Vicar of St Stephen's, Mr W. B. Killpack and Mr E. B. Hutchison, Vicar and Curate of St James's, Devonport, and Mr W. J. St Aubyn.

The proceedings terminated in the Bishop's "Judgment," which, though including an expression of his disapproval of the altar-cross and flowers, consisted chiefly of a generous eulogium of Miss Sellon and her companions. It contained such passages as these:—"Most heartily and earnestly do I thank you for having come here on this mission of Christian love, for having laboured so devoutly, and by God's blessing so usefully—for having endured more than yet I ever knew woman to endure, with a patience and resignation, and a feeling of superiority to all human consideration, which I never hope to see required in any person again. I declare most solemnly, that the result of this investigation is to me that of the most unmixed admiration. . . . . I rejoice that there is in England established a Sisterhood of Mercy. I thank Miss Sellon for establishing such a Sisterhood in this diocese. I rejoice to thank her as a member of the Church of England for having by her wonderful exertions rescued in part her Church from that reproach hitherto very frequently borne against her by the Roman Catholics, namely, that we are incapable of raising among our women anything like that spirit of love which has exerted itself to so wonderful a degree in many instances in Roman Catholic countries." *

The "Judgment," which as a composition was hardly worthy of the occasion, was in itself unsatisfactory, in that it contained no clearly expressed declaration that the accusa-

* *G. R. Prynne*, 48, 53, 63, 116.

tion of Romanism was ill-founded or mistaken. But this it did make manifest—that the work of the Sisters enjoyed not only the sanction but the most cordial approbation of the Diocesan; and therein the Bishop acted courageously and shewed himself to be more enlightened and more advanced than most of the Church authorities of that period.

The immediate effects of this action of Bishop Phillpotts were not happy. The tone of the Enquiry and his whole conduct of it were not calculated to conciliate or persuade, but rather to foster irritation and opposition; and very soon there were published two formal Protests—one signed by eleven of the parochial clergymen of the Three Towns and neighbourhood, headed by the Vicar of St Andrew's, Plymouth, and the other by about forty laymen. The latter included men of such high rank as Rear-Admiral Pasco and Vice-Admiral Thomas and Colonel Dunsterville; magistrates of repute, like George F. Somerville and Cornelius Tripe and G. W. Saltau; and Joseph Greaves, Schoolmaster; and a number of solicitors and medical men, among them being the devout churchman, Dr James Litle. Furthermore, the Devonport Board of Commissioners speedily evinced their *animus* by withdrawing from Miss Sellon's charge three of the Workhouse children, who were inmates of her Home.*

However, the good work of Miss Sellon, who was recognised as the foundress of Anglican Sisterhoods, extended and prospered. Schools and orphanages were started by her in various places; she rented blocks of houses for poor tenants, enforcing among them simple rules of conduct; and branches of her Sisterhood were founded in other towns, some of her Sisters also going out to the Crimea during the Russian War. But it was a hard struggle, and bitter was the pamphlet and newspaper warfare that waged for a while in Devonport and Plymouth—with the grievous result that the Bishop thought fit to resign the post of Visitor. Still, she persisted bravely as long as her powers lasted; and when the end came in 1876 after fifteen years of paralysis—the result of her self-denying exertions—the work that she had in-

* *Report of Enquiry with an Appendix*, edited by R. C. Rogers.

augurated for the Diocese of Exeter and for the Church of England was firmly established, and also her own unblemished reputation.*

This case was followed by somewhat similar action on the part of the Bishop three years later, when the practice of hearing Confessions in St Peter's Church had aroused the ire and the acrimonious opposition of the Protestant incumbents of the Three Towns—Dr John Hatchard (St Andrew's), Mr H. A. Greaves (Charles' Church), Mr T. C. Childs (St Mary's), and Mr W. H. Nantes (St George's), and of Mr T. G. Postlethwaite (Curate of St George's). The occasion was the announcement of the Bishop that he would hold a Confirmation Service in St Peter's Church; whereupon those clergymen not only incited all whom they could influence to refuse to allow candidates to be presented there, but petitioned Phillpotts to rescind his notice, on the ground that "the system carried out in that church" was gravely offensive to the people of the neighbourhood, the "system" being afterwards defined as that of the Confessional. Serious charges were brought against the Vicar, Mr George Rundle Prynne—that Confessions were heard in secret behind locked doors; that persons, even very young children, were compelled to confess; and that improper or even immoral questions were asked by the priest. Public feeling was so deeply stirred that Prynne's character lay under serious suspicion, and he was condemned in many quarters. The Bishop perceived that the reputation of the Church demanded that this matter should be investigated, and he adopted the method of a public Enquiry, over which he presided at the Royal Hotel, Plymouth, the proceedings lasting for five hours on September 22nd, 1852. The vicar was defended by his assistant curate, the Reverend F. Darling, and the enquiry resulted in a complete vindication of the accused; for the evidence brought against him so entirely broke down, that he was not even called upon for his reply. His Lordship therefore concluded the trial with these weighty words:—"I exonerate Mr Prynne from any blame in this matter, and I acquit him even of indiscretion, and I pray God that

* *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, LI, 228; *G. R. Prynne*, 118—121.

every clergyman in my diocese may do his duty as well as Mr Prynne has done his." *

It was in the early part of Bishop Phillpotts's time that an important controversy, followed by a famous lawsuit, arose concerning the method of appointing a Dean of Exeter—a controversy that involved much wider issues than that one cathedral. The trouble was consequent on the death of Dean Landon at the close of 1838, whereupon without delay the Greater Chapter were cited to meet in order to fill the vacancy, the regulations—originally drawn up by Bishop Bruere in 1225, and never abrogated—ordaining that the Chapter, having obtained licence from the Bishop, were to choose for the office one of the Canons, their choice being subject only to the Bishop's confirmation. When the Chapter assembled, there were read to them Letters Patent under the Great Seal, which, treating the office as in the donation of the Crown, granted the deanery to Lord Wriothesley Russell, and commanded the Chapter to admit and install him into that dignity. On their behalf their President wrote to Lord Melbourne to point out that they were precluded from doing this, inasmuch as their official records made it clear that they were bound to elect one of their own body, whereas the person named was not a member. Lord Melbourne in reply asked for their authority, in order that he might submit it to the Law Officers of the Crown, and with this request they complied. Part of their contention was allowed to be correct, for shortly afterwards fresh Letters Patent were issued, appointing as Dean one of the Prebendaries, the Reverend Thomas Grylls. To this, however, they objected that it was their established custom to choose none but a Canon Residentiary, and they replied accordingly to Lord Melbourne. The next step was the passing of an Act of Parliament by the Government, throwing open the post to all, irrespectively of any connection with Exeter. Nothing daunted, the Chapter met on June 27th (two days before the six months' limit was reached), and elected the Reverend Thomas Hill Lowe, Precentor and Canon Residentiary, to be their Dean; and, the election having been confirmed by the Bishop,

* *G. R. Prynne*, 70-91.

on his mandate Dean Lowe was formally installed in office. The Government, however, would not bow to defeat, but passed through Parliament a bill which vested in the Crown the patronage of all deaneries of the old foundation; and when Bishop Phillpotts proposed a clause exempting Exeter from this new legislation, he was defeated by 31 to 21. The representatives of the Crown attempted to make their victory even more complete, for in the following year a case was brought into the Court of Queen's Bench, whereby the Crown called upon the Exeter Chapter to qualify Mr Grylls by making him a Canon Residentiary, and then to elect him as Dean, the election of Lowe being quashed. The Crown based this claim on the fact that on some previous occasions the Chapter had accepted a Crown nomination. This, however, was disallowed by Lord Denman, and Dean Lowe remained in possession, though subsequent vacancies, both here and elsewhere, have regularly been filled by the Crown.*

The name of Bishop Phillpotts will ever be indissolubly linked with one of the most notable of controversies of modern England, a controversy which figured in those times as an event fraught with important issues, and in which his Lordship's salient characteristics were displayed to the full—a free indulgence in litigation, magnificent ability in argument and contention, and a pertinacious continuance of the fight to the very end. His opponent was one who was worthy of his mettle, for George Cornelius Gorham, B.D., had been a Fellow of Queens' College, Cambridge, after graduating as third Wrangler and second Smith's Prizeman, and also gaining the Norrisian Prize for an *Essay on Public Worship*. He was known to hold questionable views on the subject of baptismal regeneration—maybe imbibed from a Quaker teacher of his youth—and Bishop Dampier of Ely had threatened to refuse him ordination, though he ultimately consented. Many years later he came to the Exeter diocese as Vicar of St Just-in-Penwith, to which Phillpotts instituted him; but after only a year there (long enough for a quarrel with his Bishop about the nomination of a curate), he was

* *Report of the Case*, R. Barnes, introduction, and p. 17.

presented by Lord Chancellor Cottenham to the vicarage of Brampford Speke in Devon. This would involve a considerable diminution of stipend, but the proximity to Exeter would be helpful for educational purposes; and, as Mr Gorham was now sixty years old, he welcomed the prospect of lighter duties. The Bishop, however, intimated that he must examine the vicar-designate, and be satisfied of his orthodoxy, before he would consent to institute him; so, for four days in December 1847, he was subjected to a searching examination on the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, and this was renewed during three days in the following March. Gorham held that the regeneration of infants was not necessarily effected through Baptism, but that the grace of regeneration might be bestowed either before or in or after Baptism; while the Bishop pointed out that, inasmuch as the *Book of Common Prayer* speaks of a child who has been baptized privately—and therefore irrespective of any faith on the part of sponsors—as "by Baptism regenerate," therefore the Church of England teaches that regeneration is necessarily and always effected in an infant by Baptism, and by that means only. As Gorham would not accept this teaching, the Bishop refused to institute him, on the ground that he did not hold the doctrine of the Church of England.

The contest then began by Gorham applying for a monition out of the Registry of the Court of Arches, calling upon the Bishop to show cause why he should not institute him; and this led to the case being formally tried in that Court, Sir H. J. Fust, after taking a year and a half to consider his judgment, at last delivering his verdict entirely in the Bishop's favour. Gorham thereupon appealed to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, and five of the six lay judges reversed the decision of the Court of Arches, the two Archbishops concurring, but Bishop Blomfield of London dissenting —these three being called in as Assessors. There was much ground for objection against the lay judges, both on account of their religious views and also because of lack of learning on questions of Church doctrine, and neither Primate could claim to be a theologian; so that Churchmen were naturally altogether dissatisfied with the issue of the case, and there

was much discontent that Church matters of supreme importance should be subject to such a judicature.

However, Phillpotts did his utmost. He applied to the Court of Queen's Bench for an injunction to restrain the Court of Arches from giving effect to the decision of the Privy Council; and, on that being refused, he made a similar application to the Court of Common Pleas; and, when that failed, he tried the Court of Exchequer. Furthermore, he published his formal and weighty protest, which even included an excommunication of the Archbishop of Canterbury:—"Whereas the said George Cornelius Gorham did manifestly and notoriously hold the said heretical doctrines, and hath not since retracted or disclaimed the same, any archbishop or bishop, or any official of any archbishop or bishop, who shall institute the said George Cornelius Gorham to the cure and government of the souls of the parishioners of the said parish of Brampford Speke within our diocese aforesaid, will hereby incur the sin of supporting and favouring the said heretical doctrines; and we do hereby renounce and repudiate all communion with any one, be he who he may, who shall so institute the said George Cornelius Gorham as aforesaid." Another step was to endeavour to procure the establishment of a more satisfactory Court of Appeal in matters of doctrine. This he did by introducing a Bill in the House of Lords, giving the right of hearing appeals in charges of heresy to the Upper House of Convocation, which had been constituted the final Court of Appeal in the Reformation Statute, certain lay judges being added as Assessors. The proposal, however, was not acceptable to the Whig ministry, and the Bill was rejected by 84 votes to 51.

Immense interest was taken in this affair by the religious world, and over fifty works were published on the controversy, one of which—a *résumé* of the case by the Bishop—obtained so wide a circulation that its sale covered his legal expenses, Gorham's being paid by a public subscription. The latter was instituted to Brampford Speke on August 6th, 1851, by the Archbishop of Canterbury, acting on instructions issued by the Court of Arches; but he lived only six years to enjoy the benefice, though sufficiently long to rebuild

and embellish his church, and to establish friendly relations with his diocesan.*

Possibly Bishop Phillpotts is known to the world principally on account of this great lawsuit, whereby he unsuccessfully endeavoured to prevent Mr Gorham from becoming vicar of Brampford Speke ; but, in truth, his conception and management of the Synod of Exeter constitute a far more valid ground for fame than the Gorham case, which was its *fons et origo* ; for the Synod was organized with consummate ability, and conducted with wisdom and dignity, so that the perusal of its *Acts* fills the heart of the churchman with pride in his Church and with admiration for the Bishop.

Early in 1851 he announced to his diocese that he had decided to summon a Synod, and soon afterwards he instructed his archdeacons to publish the scheme to the rural deans, whose Chapters were to suggest topics that it might be profitable to treat of, in addition to the great object of the Synod, which was to be the solemn affirmation of the article in the Creed—" I believe in one baptism for the remission of sins "—and the Church's teaching concerning the grace bestowed in that sacrament. The list of subjects selected by the Bishop was to be remitted to the Chapters a month before the Synod, in order that they might be discussed by them ; and each Chapter was to elect two representatives, who were to attend the Synod together with their rural dean, the other members being the Bishop, the Cathedral Chapter, the Archdeacons, and the Bishop's Chaplains.

The scheme was a bold one, for no Synod had been held in the diocese since that of Bishop Quivel in 1287, and the post-Reformation instances in other dioceses were few and unimportant (chiefly Norwich, St Asaph, and Kilmore) ; besides which, no precedent could be found for the attendance of the clergy by representation only. Serious objections were raised from the legal standpoint, culminating in a question asked in the House of Commons of the Prime Minister (Lord John Russell), who replied that the Attorney General and the Solicitor General were of opinion that, though the constitution of the proposed Synod was contrary to all

* G. G. Perry, III, chap. 15 ; *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, XXII, 243.

precedent, there was no actual illegality in the proposal. The House, however, displayed considerable *animus* against the Bishop, a feeling that was evidently shared by the Prime Minister himself. All England was stirred by the project, so that the Reverend John Keble even thought it advisable to issue a pamphlet, addressed to his parishioners at Hursley, defending the action of Bishop Phillpotts. Within the diocese the opposition was strong, chiefly because of the Bishop's High Church views. Meetings of protest were held; circular letters were published, bearing the signatures of 111 clergymen, who declared that they would have nothing to do with the proposed Synod; while the vestries of Tormohun and Upton appealed to the Archbishop for his interference, and were informed that his Grace was by no means blind to the probability of evil results, and greatly regretted that such a measure should have been devised.

Ultimately, however, the Synod was well attended. Out of thirty-two rural deaneries there were only three rural deans who were not present, and only six clerical representatives were missing (no one came from Trigg Minor, and only the Rural Dean from Plymtree). The Dean of the Cathedral (T. H. Lowe), however, was not there, nor the Precentor (W. J. Phillpotts), who was also Archdeacon of Cornwall, and it is noticeable that there was no one from the Three Towns —the chief centre of the Low Church opposition. The assembly, then, consisted of 112 members—the Bishop, 110 priests (of whom as many as 9 were assistant curates), and one layman (Mr Ralph Barnes, the Registrar). They met in the Chapter-house at Exeter on Wednesday, June 25th, and at ten o'clock proceeded to the Cathedral for Morning Prayer, followed by a very lengthy and learned sermon, chiefly dealing with the Church's teaching on Baptism, preached by Prebendary George Hole, Rector of Chulmleigh. After this the Holy Communion was celebrated, and then all returned to the Chapter-house. The Synod lasted for three days, and each day the members attended Morning and Evening Prayer in the Cathedral.

The main part of the business of the Synod was the presenting and discussing of three Declarations—on Baptism,

on Secession, and on the founding of a Roman Catholic bishopric at Plymouth. The gist of these Declarations is contained in the following passages. First :—" We, the Bishop and Clergy of the Diocese of Exeter, in Synod assembled, at this time deem it necessary to declare our firm and immovable adherence to the great Article of Faith, ' One Baptism for the remission of sins ' ; affirming it, as it is authoritatively set forth in the Nicene Creed by the Second Oecumenical Council, has been held by the Catholic Church in all ages, and is taught unequivocally by our own Church in its authorized formularies, especially in the Offices of Baptism and in the Catechism." After full discussion this was adopted unanimously, and very impressive must have been the moment when the whole Synod rose, and the Bishop solemnly said, " Thank God for this ; let His holy Name be praised ! " and the Synod responded, " Amen."

The second was a Declaration of adherence to the Doctrine and Discipline of the Church of England, and ran thus :— " Deeply deploring the cases of defection from our Communion, which have occurred in the last ten years, even among the Clergy, which cases, few as they may be in comparison of the whole number of our Clergy, are yet numerous, when compared with those which have occurred in our Church at any former period within the last 190 years ; We hereby solemnly record our own hearty, and, with God's blessing, unalterable attachment to the Church in which He has called us to serve, cordially accepting its Doctrine as set forth in its Articles of Religion and Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments, and thankfully acknowledging its Ministry by Bishops, Priests and Deacons to have descended to us in unbroken succession from the Holy Apostles :—And we further record our full conviction that Secession from this Church, being a sound part of the Catholic Church, to any other Religious Community, is in itself an act of Schism, and as such perilous to Salvation ; and in particular that secession to the Roman Community in England is not only an act of Schism, but involves also the abandonment of truth for error." This was adopted, there being five dissentients.

The third Declaration was as follows:—"Whereas the Bishop of Rome hath taken upon himself to name the Town of Plymouth in the Archdeaconry of Totnes in our Diocese of Exeter to be a See in subjection to the said Bishop of Rome—and this is professed to be done for the greater convenience of the 'Popish Recusants' or Refusers of the Catholic Communion of the Church of England. . . . . We, the Bishop and Clergy of the said Diocese, in Synod assembled, do hereby declare that the said appointment of a See of Plymouth by the Bishop of Rome, being contrary to the Canons of the Catholic Church, is manifestly schismatical and void,—that it sets up Altar against Altar in our said Diocese, and usurps the Primacy of England. And we further declare, in respect of this and the other differences which unhappily during 300 years have divided the Churches of the West, that we desire to renew the appeal which we and our Fathers have so long continued to a lawful and free Council of the whole Church, whenever such Council may be had, commending our cause in the meanwhile, under Him who will come to be our Judge, to the earnest prayers and to the enlightened and impartial inquiries of all good Christian people." This was adopted unanimously and without discussion.

A number of other topics were discussed, the first being the Exeter Diocesan Training College, which had already sent out thirty-three masters and had then nineteen students in residence, but which was in want of buildings to accommodate fifty, the cost of erection being £10,000. There was a lengthy debate on the Diocesan Inspection of Schools, which had been carried on by voluntary Inspectors for eleven years past; and a resolution was carried unanimously to the effect that it is "highly desirable that at least one paid Inspector be appointed for the Diocese." Many members spoke strongly on behalf of the rubrical direction concerning the public catechising of children in the Church on Sunday afternoons after the Second Lesson, and the Synod passed unanimously a resolution in favour of it. The rest of the time was occupied by discussions on "the Continued Pastoral Superintendence of the Young," on "the Restoration of a

Permanent Diaconate"—which was recommended by the Synod, and on "the desirability of the clergy obtaining lay help"; and resolutions were passed unanimously, calling upon the clergy to obey the Church's rules respecting the saying daily of Morning and Evening Prayer, and the due observance of Holy Days—which was taken to include a celebration of the Holy Communion on Ascension Day.

There were several other subjects on the list for consideration, *e.g.*, "More frequent celebration of the Holy Communion," "Separation of Services," and "Public performance of Public Baptism of Infants," but lack of time precluded the mooting of them. The proceedings concluded with prayers offered by the Bishop, who pronounced the Benediction, the closing record in the official *Acts of the Synod of Exeter* being couched in this striking and beautiful form:—"Then the Synod stood up, and the Archdeacon of Exeter said, 'In the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ let us go in Peace.' Thereupon the Synod departed, as they had assembled, in peace. Amen."

The whole proceedings seem to have been most happy and helpful. The Bishop was a first-rate chairman; the discussions were pervaded by a spirit of brotherliness and mutual consideration, and were throughout conducted with admirable decorum and fair-mindedness; and the general result, both of the actual discussions in the Synod and of its formal Declarations and Resolutions, naturally conduced to the uplifting of religious life in the diocese and the encouragement of the clergy in loyalty to the doctrine and discipline of the Church. The meeting of the Synod was a sort of climax in the episcopate of Henry Phillpotts, and henceforth his position was assured by the respectful admiration of at least the majority of his clergy and laity. In many respects the teaching and practices advocated by the Synod were much ahead of those prevalent at that time; and it is in no small measure due to the action and influence of Bishop Phillpotts that the present standard of Churchmanship in Devon and Cornwall, one of the most remote parts of England, is more advanced than that of most other dioceses. His own estimate of the value of the Synod was highly favourable;

for, looking back upon it after the lapse of three years, he pointedly referred to it as "a great success," adding that his reason for not repeating the experiment was the infirmity consequent on his great age—he was then seventy-six years old.*

The institution of three useful branches of Church work signalized the declining years of Phillpotts's episcopate. The first was the Torbay and Dartmouth Mission to Seamen, founded in 1861 by Mr William Gibbs of Tyntesfield near Bristol. About the same time the Reverend the Honourable C. L. Courtenay opened at Bovey Tracy the Devon House of Mercy—an institution so favoured and so beneficent that it has afforded a home and training to a hundred women at one time, while enabled to make the proud announcement that "there is not a single hired person in the house." It was quite of a piece with the Bishop's keen churchmanship that he should encourage the study of the *Book of Common Prayer*, and one of his last good works was to give an endowment for the purpose, and an annual examination is a lasting outcome of the "Bishop Phillpotts' Prayer Book Fund." †

"Henry of Exeter" breathed his last on September 18th, 1869, in his own house, Bishopstowe, near Torquay, his body being buried at St Mary Church, and *The Times* in a leading article next day thus summed up his life's work:—"He wrote upon many subjects, and whatever he touched he adorned; but the touch was fatal, and the decoration that of the funeral obsequies. Upon everything that he ever wrote of a political or polemic character it might probably be now inscribed that it was written to no purpose. The judgment of mankind, or simply the course of events, went the other way. . . . We have done, or are doing, or are about to do, everything that Henry of Exeter said ought not to be done on any account." There was much truth in this; but though Bishop Phillpotts was not a lovable man, or a Church leader who founded a party or school, he is really deserving of very great admiration for his practical sagacity, his stalwart defence of Churchmen and Church principles,

* *Charge* of 1854, 3, 4.

† *Charge* of 1863, 11, 16, 18.

and his generosity for ecclesiastical works and causes; and though—it must be allowed—he lacked some of the most beautiful Christian traits, yet the contrast as regards equipment and efficiency between the conditions in the diocese of Exeter in 1831 and those in 1869 is proof that this prelate exercised greatness as an administrator and a ruler.

There was one strange similarity in the circumstances in which both Bishop Phillpotts and Bishop Temple entered on their episcopates—their appointments were unpopular, and neither was wanted or welcomed by the diocese. In each case this was true of the bulk of the clergy, and of most of the educated and thoughtful lay people, but especially as regards the second of the pair. The antipathy to Phillpotts was not so strong, for the reasons were less weighty and the issues comparatively unimportant; and, furthermore, men had not learned how to voice their protests as early as 1830, nor had Cathedral Chapters yet threatened to refuse to elect the nominee of a royal *Letter Missive*. But devout believers, many in number, including some of the most learned and highly placed, were profoundly perturbed by the opinions and doctrines promulgated nine years before by *Essays and Reviews*, the very first of which was written by the Head Master of Rugby. True, his own contribution to the book—an essay on "The Education of the World"—was little open to exception; but, among the other writers, Rowland Williams had been tried and condemned for denying the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, and Henry Bristow Wilson for rejecting the doctrine of the eternity of punishment; and though both sentences on appeal had been reversed by the Privy Council, the book had been laid under the Church's ban by being censured by the Convocation of Canterbury. Thus it was because men seriously and honestly doubted his orthodoxy, especially concerning the credibility of the Bible, that his nomination was so strongly condemned, and such strenuous opposition to his appointment was aroused. Many of the rural deaneries passed apprehensive protests, and a memorial, signed by a large number of the clergy of the diocese, petitioned the Dean and Chapter to refuse to elect Dr Temple to the bishopric of their diocese. Without, too, the con-

sternation was widespread, and extreme men of both parties in the Church were united in the endeavour to keep out of the episcopate a contributor to that "soul-destroying book." Such leading churchmen as Dr Pusey and the Earl of Shaftesbury, Dean Mansel of St Paul's and Dean Burgon of Chichester, and Archdeacon Denison, were foremost in this agitation; and even some of his closest friends and supporters—Bishop Harold Browne, Bishop Wilberforce, Sir Stafford Northcote—begged him, though in vain, to dissociate himself from the pernicious views of his fellow essayists, or at least to publish a doctrinal statement to satisfy men that he was really an orthodox Churchman.

The objectors carried on the futile contest to the very end, and when the Cathedral Chapter adopted the Queen's recommendation by thirteen votes to six, four of their number being absent, formal opposition was brought against the Confirmation in Bow Church; but, though the matter was disputed at length, the Vicar General ruled that the Archbishop had no choice but to obey the Royal Mandate. Finally, even the Consecration in Westminster Abbey was delayed at the last moment. The Primate was not present, on account of sickness; and though two others were to be consecrated (Lord Arthur Hervey for Bath and Wells, and Stirling for the Falkland Islands), only the Bishops of Ely, St David's, and Worcester were present as assisting prelates. To these the Bishop of London announced in the Jerusalem Chamber that he had just then received protests from several of the bishops of the province against the consecration of Temple, and he desired to have their opinion as to whether he should perform the ceremony or not; and it was only after he had been fortified by their expressed approbation, that the procession was allowed to issue forth, and the tension of the waiting congregation, increased by the gloom of a foggy December day (St Thomas's Day, 1869), was at last relieved.

But the new Bishop enjoyed some initial advantages that were not possessed by his predecessor. In the first place he was a west countryman. True, he was born at Santa Maura in the Ionian Islands, where his father was Commandant; but from the age of nine his home was in

Devonshire, Major Temple having bought a farm, Axon, near Culmstock, and his schooling he received at Blundell's, Tiverton. Besides, his mother was Cornish—one of the Carveths, a yeoman family of St Probus; and his paternal grandfather had been for some years Rector of Mamhead, and died, after a longer incumbency, as Vicar of St Gluvias near Falmouth. Then it was a very real advantage that, though the orthodoxy of some of the other contributors to *Essays and Reviews* was decidedly questionable, there was no just ground for any such objection against his essay. By many this was not recognised for a long while, but in course of time it told upon the judgment of fair-minded men; as, too, did the discovery—likewise a gradual process—that he was in no way responsible for, and even at the time of their publication was ignorant of, the views expressed by the other writers. But more effective than all else was the man's transparent honesty and open straightforwardness. It became evident to all that his life was the life of a convinced believer, who loved God above all else, and who strove his utmost to attain to the Pauline standard:—"We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants, for Jesus' sake."

One of the most remarkable features of his Exeter episcopate is the way in which he steadily gained the confidence and the admiration of his clergy. "If I once get amongst them, I have little doubt of winning them," he wrote. He did get among them, chiefly on Confirmation tours and by his frequent presence at Ruri-decanal Chapters and Conferences, whereby he became known to them; and when they came to know him, they appreciated his worth. The result is partly shewn by the address presented to him in 1885 by 654 signatories, which commenced thus:—"We, the undersigned clergy resident in this Diocese, who have served or are now serving in it, cannot permit the occasion of your translation to the See of London to pass without the expression of our heartfelt reverence and esteem, and of our sincere regret at the severance of the ties which for fifteen years have so happily bound us together." * And there was in him a

* *Memoirs*, I, 597.

superiority to all petty resentment, a noble generosity that made him forget, or perhaps intentionally fail to discover, who were those who had set themselves against him at his coming. "Are you the son of my old friend, Mr B.?" were the words with which he greeted the son of one such, when in the presence of a large company at Kelly College he marched up to receive prizes from his Lordship's hands. This was a fair sample of his conduct, and he was ever ready to take it for granted that those of contrary opinions to his own were swayed by the best intentions.

But his life was marred by one human failing, which to many men and women, who knew not the beauty of his character, was more noticeable than his many and greater virtues. A certain innate imperiousness and roughness had naturally developed in one who had little to do with the refining influences of society, who did not marry until his fifty-fifth year, and who held such independent posts as the Principalship of Kneller Hall, the Inspectorship of Training Schools, and for eleven years the Headmastership of Rugby. He did not mean to be rude or ungracious, but many of his clergy bitterly resented being snubbed and treated as schoolboys by an autocratic pedagogue; and hostesses were disappointed, when their efforts to provide him with the best, failed to elicit appreciation, or were even disparaged by some slighting remark. Sometimes people would make so bold as to tell him his faults quite plainly, and thereby they revealed the true nobleness of the man; for when the clergy in a Ruri-decanal Chapter gave free utterance to their grievance, declaring that they, who looked for a Father-in-God, found in him a harsh and unsympathetic ruler, the tears rolled down his cheeks, and he frankly acknowledged his failure, and promised to strive to fulfil their ideal. Nor was that all, for he has been known to follow up such an occurrence very soon by promoting to a better benefice the leader of such out-spoken criticism.

It must not be inferred, however, that he was always or even generally hard or brusque. Not only was he the possessor of a keen sense of humour, which prompted him to utter many sayings which were witty as well as wise;

but his disposition was a happy one, which delighted in pleasantries, especially with the young, and he was entirely in his element with schoolboys, whose hearts he seldom failed to win. There was something in him that appealed to the boyish nature, as it had done at Rugby, where he gained such a grip upon his pupils that, when the mother of one of them wrote to warn him not to allow himself to be led away from the faith of his fathers by the contributor to *Essays and Reviews*, he sent the reply:—"Dear Mother,—Temple's all right; but if he turns Mahometan, all the school will turn too."*

Characteristics and advantages such as these, added to the literary attainments of a Scholar and Fellow of Balliol and a Double First at Oxford, and to his indefatigable application to hard work for his diocese, were sure to tell in the end; and ere long it was apparent that Gladstone's recommendation to her Majesty was fully justified, for the Church in the west, which under Phillpotts had been provided with so much necessary organization or ecclesiastical machinery, was now under Temple to experience the infusion into it of vitality and motive power.

There were four different ways in which this vitality was manifested, four activities which signalize this episcopate as remarkable.

One of these was the improvement of the clergy, who were raised to a higher standard spiritually, intellectually, ecclesiastically. Beginning with his Ordination candidates, he endeavoured to separate them from secular surroundings by making the Palace their home for the examination period—a period that he very soon divided into two, the first part comprising the examination proper, and the second, following after an interval, being devoted chiefly to spiritual preparation; while most of the Embertide addresses in the Chapel were delivered by himself, when he poured out his soul in most fervent and soul-searching eloquence. Occasionally the ordinands were taken off on the Saturday to some important country town, in order that the people in different parts of the diocese might have the instructive experience of

* *Men of Devon*, 38.

witnessing an Ordination. Then, with the object of educating his clergy, he made it his practice to attend their Ruri-decanal Chapters. He would appoint for discussion some salient and useful subject bearing on clerical life or parochial work, sometimes devotional or pastoral, sometimes legal or administrative; and, having himself first dealt with it fully in his own masterly way, he called upon each one present in turn to express his own opinion. Before long, with the object of similarly influencing the laity, he inaugurated Ruri-decanal Conferences (first started in 1875), which he ordered in the same manner; and both of these were supplemented by occasional Quiet Days, conducted by himself, in order that the more definitely religious faculties of clergy and laity might be developed. Here, truly, was a great and important work, and who shall gauge the lasting effects of such an education on the lives and characters of those who availed themselves of such glorious opportunities?

Another chief feature of this episcopate was the advance made in securing good education, especially religious education, for the young. The city of Exeter was possessed of some old foundations and endowments, which were utilized for this purpose. Close to East Gate by the High Street the Hospital of St John was founded by Gilbert and John Long about 1225; and a century later, under a scheme of Bishop Stapeldon, carried out by Bishop Grandisson, there was attached to it a Grammar School. The Hospital was suppressed at the Dissolution, but the School was refounded in the time of Charles I by Hugh Crossing, Mayor of Exeter. There were also the Episcopal Schools, four charity schools, two for boys and two for girls, founded by Bishop Blackall early in the eighteenth century, but afterwards reduced to two; and the Hele School, opened in 1850, and partly endowed by moneys given by Elise Hele in 1632, a portion of his benefaction being known as Maynard's Charity. From these heterogeneous elements a Schools Commission, largely under the guidance of Bishop Temple, evolved a comprehensive scheme, whereby any boy had open to him the opportunity of mounting an educational ladder, and passing on step by step from an elementary school even to one of the great

universities. Thus, above the lowest grade are the Practising School, attached to the Diocesan Training College for Schoolmasters, and the Episcopal Schools on St David's Hill, and the reconstituted St John's Hospital School; from which a boy may go on and gain free education at Hele's School, and again from there to the Grammar School—newly built in Victoria Park; and this last has scholarships and exhibitions tenable at Oxford and Cambridge. At the same time a series of schools was arranged for the education of girls—the Episcopal School on St David's Hill, the Episcopal Modern School in Pennsylvania Road, and the Exeter High School in the Barnfield.

In most of these schools the religious teaching provided is that of the Church of England, subject to a conscience clause; and the admirable scheme came into working order in 1877, a year that also marked educational advance in other places in the diocese. Blundell's School at Tiverton was at this time reorganized, having been founded in 1604 by Peter Blundell, clothier, of Tiverton. On a fresh site outside the town this school has now prospered exceedingly for many years past. Ashburton Grammar School, too, originally founded by Bishop Stapeldon in 1314, was also reorganized in the same year by the Charity Commissioners. And Kelly College, founded by a munificent bequest of Admiral Kelly, a member of the family of Kelly of that ilk, was opened in the autumn of 1877. Other public schools were started or reorganized about the same time, so that Bishop Temple's period was in that respect peculiarly busy; and "the fact that when he left Exeter the Voluntary Schools of the diocese were stronger and more numerous than when he came to it, and that the legacy of his spirit remained after he left Exeter, is due to the force of his first utterances, and the dogged pertinacity with which in and out of season, he followed them up." *

A third achievement of this time was the restoration of the Cathedral and the extension of its use to diocesan purposes. But the credit for this—at least in the former respect—must be placed to the account of the Dean and

* *Memoirs*, I, 347.

Chapter; for modern bishops' incomes are in comparison so much smaller than those of the Middle Ages, and have so many calls to respond to, that what was done by a Stapeldon or a Grandisson would be beyond the means of a Temple. The capitular body at that time, and throughout almost the whole of this episcopate, consisted first of Dean Archibald Boyd, well known as a staunch supporter, or even leader, of the Evangelical party, who had written many books on theological and ecclesiastical topics, such as *Church Extension* and a *History of the Prayer Book*, and others on Christian doctrines and on the Roman Catholic position. Next to him as Precentor was Canon Frederick Charles Cook, fourth Classic at Cambridge (and "wooden spoon" in the Mathematical Tripos), who was famous for his biblical learning, being editor of *The Speaker's Commentary on the Bible*. So devoted was he to his important studies that on the score of his literary work he had refused his consent, when Bishop Phillpotts asked to be allowed to name him first for the proposed appointment of a Suffragan Bishop of the Exeter diocese.* The Chancellor was Canon Edward Charles Harington, an Oxford graduate, who, like the Dean, had published works on the Prayer Book and on Roman Catholicism, though his churchmanship was not of the same type as the Dean's. The other Canons Residentiary (for there were five until the newly founded diocese of Truro took off one) were Henry Woollcombe, a first class Classic of Oxford, and a diligent student of the New Testament, who held also the archdeaconry of Barnstaple; Sackville Usher Bolton Lee, an Oriel man; and Philip Freeman, Archdeacon of Exeter, author of *The Principles of Divine Service* and of works on architecture, including *The Architectural History of Exeter Cathedral*. Bishop Temple had very few opportunities of appointing to the more important posts, but he was able to elevate his old Master at Blundell's, Henry Sanders, to be Canon and Archdeacon of Exeter in succession to Freeman.

Restoration was imperatively needed for Exeter Cathedral, partly because natural decay had resulted in much crumbling

* *Notes and Gleanings*, II, 120.

of the stonework, whereby the grace of its lines, within as well as without, had been marred—decay which had not sufficiently been made good by the generosity of Dean Seth Ward, who had spent £25,000 (£166,666) on the work in 1660, or by the expenditure of £16,000 on the fabric by the Dean and Chapter during the fourteen years preceding the year 1865. But to natural decay had been added ruthless destruction and boorish mutilations. Stapeldon's magnificent altar and reredos had been swept away, apparently in the reign of Edward VI; Elizabeth's Visitors had removed the old altars; the Brantynghaın and Courtenay chantries in the nave had disappeared by the early part of the seventeenth century; the Puritans were probably responsible for the wholesale destruction of most of the coloured glass and images and frescoes that had escaped the attention of former depredators; and the pillars of the choir had been hacked about in order to facilitate the erection of galleries. Besides, the beauty of the interior had been spoiled by the crowding of high pews and modern panelling; while the whole of the stonework, even including the blue purbeck pillars, had been hidden by a coating of buff-coloured wash. The Lady Chapel, which during the Commonwealth had been converted into a library at the expense of Dr Robert Vilvaine, had early in the nineteenth century again been taken into use as a Morning Chapel, but was sorely in need of beautifying. A modern reredos had been erected in the choir, the work of John Kendall in 1818, consisting of seven niches, the large central one forming a sort of canopy over the altar, with the Ten Commandments inscribed on it. This prosaic and unworthy structure had taken the place of an extraordinary predecessor of 1639, which was described by John Hoker as "A very elegant and grand Performance in Painting; it perspectively represents the Front of, and three arched Entrances into, as 'twere, another Cathedral Church, the Gateways appearing as perfect Cavities, with Roofs and Sides curiously moulded. The Portraits of Moses and Aaron, supporting the two Tables of the Decalogue, seem as if really standing forward in full Relief, the first cloath'd in golden Raiment, the other with a Mitre on his Head, and array'd

in other Pontificalibus, etc. The Drapery of both really admirable."

To remedy all defects and to restore to the sacred fane the beauty of holiness, the services of Sir G. Gilbert Scott were engaged in 1870. The task (like the building of Solomon's Temple) occupied a period of seven years, and the cost exceeded £50,000. By scraping the stonework the beautiful tints of red and cream and grey and blue were brought to sight again ; and much colour and gilding were used for the adorning of the roofs of the choir and the Lady Chapel, in imitation of the original design. All decays and damage were made good, several hundred tons of purbeck marble being employed to supply deficiencies in the pillars. The admirable episcopal throne was cleansed from its coatings of paint and varnish, and its *motif* was adopted in the design of new canopies for the ancient *miserere* seats, suitable benches, ornamented with elaborate carvings, being fitted in the choir, which was paved with coloured marbles and encaustic tiles. One bold innovation was a decided improvement—the solid masonry under the roodloft was pierced ; and thus a vista was opened from end to end of the Cathedral, and it became practicable for worshippers in the nave to be united as one body with those in the choir. The ornaments and fittings were all of the best, and included several munificent gifts—Chancellor Harington contributed £4,000, out of which were provided the high altar, the Bishop's seat in the sanctuary, the altar-rails, the faldstool, the stalls in the choir, the lectern in the nave, and the east window in the Lady Chapel ; all the furniture of the Lady Chapel was paid for by Lady Rolle ; the pulpit in the presbytery was given by Mr Edwin Force, Chapter Clerk ; the window in the south tower was presented by Lord Coleridge ; and that in the north tower was subscribed for by the women of Devon.

One other item has yet to be mentioned, and that the most conspicuous of all, *viz.*, the reredos, which was the costly gift of Chancellor Harington and Dr Blackall (a descendant of the Bishop of that name). It is composed of alabaster and marble, and is enriched with gilding and a wealth of coloured gems. The central panel contains a carved re-

presentation of the Ascension, and to the left is the Transfiguration and to the right the Descent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost. The whole is surmounted by a cross, flanked on either side by an angel. All the figures are really graven images, but the whole is of so innocent a character, that, while thoroughly devotional, it could hardly be suspected of encouraging any erroneous form of worship. But yet it was made the subject of a famous legal action, Phillpotts *v.* Boyd, the case occupying more than a year, and being carried through all its stages during the progress of the restoration.

It was a curious circumstance that the objector was a High Churchman, while it was a Low Churchman who maintained the legality of the reredos, the former being Chancellor Phillpotts, Archdeacon of Cornwall and eldest son of the late Bishop, and the latter the Dean of Exeter. The first step was a petition from the Chancellor calling on the Diocesan as Visitor of the Cathedral to condemn the reredos as an illegal ornament and also as having been erected without a faculty. The Bishop had no choice but to try the case, but he left the legal investigation to the conduct of Mr Justice Keating, whom he appointed his Assessor, and gave judgment according to his finding. This was to the effect that the Dean and Canons had transgressed ecclesiastical law in erecting the reredos without a faculty, and also that the images were in themselves illegal, and that therefore the reredos and images were to be removed.

Against this decision the Dean and Chapter appealed to the Court of Arches, and obtained a favourable judgment on each point, the Dean of Arches holding that "the absence of an episcopal faculty does not render the erection of this reredos illegal," and that "I do not think that in the Cathedral of Exeter the reredos put up by the Dean and Chapter can be justly said, to borrow the words of our 30th Canon, 'to endamage the Church of God, nor offend the minds of sober men.'" From the Court of Arches Chancellor Phillpotts carried on the case to the Privy Council, which upheld the opinion of the lower Court on both points; and so the reredos remains intact. It is not easy to divine the plaintiff's reason for stirring up this unnecessary strife, the only explanation

being that he had inherited his father's legal acumen and love of litigation. But his action, so costly to himself, proved of service to the Church in later years; for when similar proceedings were threatened against the much more ambitious reredos then erected in St Paul's Cathedral, the same prelate, being then Bishop of London, found himself in a position to exercise his newly conferred powers and quash the action, declaring that the Exeter case was sufficient precedent and justification for his so deciding.*

The restored Cathedral was formally re-opened on St Luke's day, October 18th, 1877, in the presence of seven bishops (Exeter, Truro, Salisbury, Bath and Wells, Oxford, Winchester, and Bishop Tozer, late of Zanzibar), of nearly four hundred of the parochial clergy, and of the Mayor and Corporation of Exeter, the sermon being preached by Bishop Harold Browne of Winchester, formerly Canon of Exeter. The event was made the occasion of presenting to the Bishop for the use of himself and his successors at Exeter a handsome crosier of ebony and ivory, adorned with figures of St Peter and St Paul, together with the Temple shield-of-arms and that of the See. It was the gift of sixty laymen of the diocese, and cost £100.†

It was natural that the accomplishment of the Cathedral Restoration scheme should give emphasis and expression to the desire for a wider utilizing of both the building itself and its staff for the benefit of the Church in the diocese. This desire was furthered soon afterwards by the appointment of a Royal Commission to enquire into the condition of Cathedrals; and the subject was at that time (1879) brought before the Diocesan Conference by the Reverend Harry Tudor (afterwards Subdean and Prebendary), who proposed that a committee be named "to consider the relations of Exeter Cathedral to the Diocese, and to offer such practical suggestions to the Royal Commissioners or to the Diocesan Conference, if time permits, as may seem to the Committee desirable." The Committee presented their Report next year, and, notwithstanding the opposition of the Dean, who

* *Memoirs*, I, 528-534.

† *Ex. Cath. Restoration*, 73, 114.

" maintained that there were no relations between the Diocese and the Cathedral, and thought it was a mistake to say that the Cathedral was the life and centre of the Diocese," the Conference adopted a series of resolutions, which, though not very practicable or useful in themselves, advocated the employing of the Canons in diocesan work.

While forwarding these resolutions to the Commissioners, the Bishop added his own suggestions, which were of a somewhat revolutionary character. He would make the Dean and Chapter a Council of the Bishop to assist him in the governing of the diocese; but, if they were to be of real use in this *rôle*, they must be in personal touch with the clergy and the diocese at large. So the Dean should have charge of the Theological College (to be revived); and the Canons, in addition to their four months' residence in the Close, should devote four months in each year to the service of the diocese—for he refused to regard canonries as retiring pensions, arguing that they were too few for that purpose and the stipends too large, and that such was foreign to their original intention. When a Canon was too old for the work, he should come under the operation of the Resignation Act, or his duties should be performed by a deputy. The Precentor-Canon should supervise the religious instruction in the elementary schools of the diocese, and himself be the Head Inspector, a first-rate musician being appointed Succentor to have control of the Cathedral music and to encourage Church music throughout the diocese. The Chancellor-Canon should be a theological scholar, who should be charged with the duty of lecturing to the clergy, especially the younger ones, at various centres, and directing their studies—which was the function of the Chancellor in olden times. Another Canon should act as diocesan representative of the Home and Foreign Missionary Societies, and be ready to preach and speak for these causes, and to supply information about their objects and operations. Furthermore, each Canon and Prebendary should have a title, connecting him with a rural deanery or a town, and should owe a duty to that place, such as an annual sermon; and the Rural Deans should become Cathedral officials, taking rank next after

the Prebendaries as a kind of untitled honorary canons. Lastly, the College of Vicars Choral he would dissolve, regarding it as an anachronism, the independent position of the Vicars being a hindrance to efficiency; and, subject to a right of appeal to the Visitor, the members should be removable by the Dean and Chapter.

Attempted legislation on this topic proved abortive; but from that time the Cathedral has become more and more a source and centre of Church life and work in the diocese; and with happy results Bishop Bickersteth adopted and acted upon one of the main proposals of his predecessor, assigning definite diocesan responsibilities and duties to each of his four residentiary Canons—a scheme that was quite unpracticable for Bishop Temple, because in the whole time of his episcopate he had only two opportunities of appointing to a canonry.

The fourth great work of this episcopate was the dividing of the diocese by the founding of the See of Truro. As we have noticed above, the early Cornishmen for five centuries and a half had their own Bishops. At first these had no well defined dioceses, but in course of time St German's was recognised as a fixed see with its own Bishops, who ruled there probably for some centuries; until in Lyfing and Leofric the Devonshire and Cornish lines were united, and then under the latter the see was removed to Exeter, which continued to be the episcopal city of the Church in Cornwall for more than eight hundred years. To Bishop Phillpotts, as already mentioned, belongs the honour of having been the first to suggest the revival of the Cornish see. The idea was taken up in 1847 by the Prime Minister, Lord John Russell, who mentioned Cornwall as one of his four proposed new bishoprics; and, though his Bill failed to pass, a Royal Commission to enquire into the condition of England's Cathedrals a few years later recommended that Cornwall should be made a diocese. Gradually the movement gathered strength. Prebendary Tatham, Rector of Boconnoc, issued a booklet, *A Cornish Bishopric; the Necessity and Means for its Restoration* (1859); Dr Walker, Vicar of St Columb Major, offered the advowson of that benefice to help to endow the see; Bishop Phillpotts expressed his readiness to hand over his Cornish patronage

to the new diocese; and the Reverend W. S. Lach-Szyrma, Curate of St Paul's, Truro, wrote and published a *Letter to Mr W. E. Gladstone* (1869), setting forth the arguments for this measure of Church Extension. Just at that time Mr Gladstone as Prime Minister was in correspondence with Dr Temple concerning the vacancy at Exeter, and he obtained from him an assurance that, when he was Bishop, he would carefully look into the matter from every point of view.

Some few years were allowed to lapse after the new appointment, and then the scheme was rapidly pushed on to successful accomplishment. First the topic was mooted by Mr Edmund Carlyon of St Austell at the Diocesan Conference of 1874. Then, in the same year, the Cornish clergy addressed a Memorial to the Bishop, and received the encouraging reply:—"I can assure the memorialists that I feel as much as they do, and perhaps even more, the need of that division of the Diocese of Exeter which they desire." Early in the following year a meeting was held at Plymouth, at which a Committee was formed, and it was decided to approach the Prime Minister, Mr Disraeli, the deputation being headed by the Bishop. At the next Diocesan Conference the Earl of Devon moved that "it is expedient that a Committee be formed, to be called 'The Diocesan Committee for promoting the restoration of a Bishopric in Cornwall'"; and the Bishop was appointed Chairman, Archdeacon Earle of Totnes Vice-Chairman, and Mr Edmund Carlyon Secretary. The Bishop offered to surrender £800 a year from his official income, Lady Rolle gave the munificent sum of £40,000, and, as a result of meetings held in various places, other contributions poured in. Finally, a Cornish Bishopric Bill was passed in 1876, and on St Mark's Day, 1877, in St Paul's Cathedral Dr Edward White Benson was consecrated as the first Bishop of Truro.

It is commonly thought that the district assigned to the Bishops of Truro, to be under their jurisdiction, was simply the county of Cornwall, the river Tamar being regarded as the boundary between the two counties, and also between the two dioceses. But this is not exactly the case. For, just above Launceston, stretching westwards from the river

into Cornwall, is a narrow loop of land, which belongs to Devon; and, by a curious delimitation, not only was this loop, consisting of the parishes of Werrington and North Petherwyn, given to Truro, but also there was added a corresponding loop on the eastern side of the Tamar, containing the parishes of Virginstow, St Giles-in-the-Heath, and Broadwoodwidger. The diocese of Truro is now reckoned as comprising 237 benefices, an area of 1,359 square miles, and a population of 328,000. The present Exeter diocese covers the rest of Devon, except the parishes of Chardstock and Hawkchurch, and includes also one Somerset parish, *viz.*, Churchstanton.

Other lesser *memorabilia* of Temple's episcopate there were, of which a few words must be said. One of these was the inauguration of the Diocesan Conference, which met for the first time in 1872. At that date such councils of clergymen and laymen were novel and few, for the example set by the diocese of Ely eight years before had not yet been followed generally. The idea accorded well with Bishop Temple's principles, who would give to Churchmen a large measure of self-government; and he was careful to make the proposed Conference as far as possible representative of the various interests in the diocese, giving seats to the chief officials and the Members of Parliament in the county, and making the churchwardens, as representatives of the people, the electorate for the lay members of the Conference. His churchmanship was manifested by his requiring as a necessary qualification that every member must be a communicant.*

By passing a special Bill through Parliament Bishop Temple brought to an end a curious and distressing ecclesiastical anomaly. As the survival of the ancient quasi-collegiate system, the incumbency of Tiverton Church was vested in four rectors and the parish was divided into five sections or "portions," each of the four rectors holding the sole cure of one section (Clare, Pitt, Priors, or Tidcombe Portion), and each in rotation being for one month also sole rector of Tiverton Church and of the fifth section (All Fours Portion). The evils of the system are obvious, for each of

* *Memoirs*, I, 363; G. G. Perry, III, 419, 421.

the four would have his own standard of churchmanship, and carry on his own teaching, and his own methods of managing the parish and conducting the services, and all this might be altered when his month of office was ended. The Act of 1884 provided that in course of time there should be five separate and independent parishes, each with its own incumbent. Thus, at present, instead of the five Portions, there are the five parishes of St Peter's, St George's, Chevithorne, Cove, and Withleigh, St Paul's (West Exe) having been split off thirty years previously.*

The previous episcopate had witnessed so much progress in the way of Church extension that the number of parishes still requiring division was not great. However, Bishop Temple was instrumental in forming sixteen daughter-parishes in Devon. One of these was in Exeter—St Matthew's; one in Torquay—St Matthias's, Ilsham; and eight in the Three Towns—St Aubyn's, Devonport, and St Matthew's and St Paul's, Stonehouse, and these in Plymouth—All Saints', St Jude's, St Luke's, St Saviour's, and Emmanuel, Compton Gifford. Of country parishes there was one in east Devon—Alfington by Ottery, the other five being in south Devon—Chudleigh Knighton, Strete, Sparkwell, Malborough, and South Milton. In Cornwall there were seven :—Devoran, Pencoys, St Elwyn, Saltash, Torpoint, and two in Penzance—St Mary's, and St John the Baptist's.

Most of these required to have churches built, and the like had to be done in some other parishes, where it was found necessary to replace the old edifice with a new one, such as St Peter's at Plymouth, Ivybridge, Luppitt, Otterton, Revelstoke, Rousdon, Davidstow, and St Feock.

Together with other structural works must be included the Palace, an ancient edifice whose existence can be traced so far back as the early part of the thirteenth century. The mediaeval Bishops had residences on their vario .s manors, but those of post-Reformation times made the Palace their home, though the last Diocesan had considered it unhealthy, and preferred to live in his own house at Bishopstowe near Torquay. Bishop Temple therefore found that much had

* *Memoirs*, I, 553; *Ch. of St Peter, Tiverton*, 10.

to be done before he could take up his abode in the Palace, and especially was it necessary to establish a new system of drainage—an undertaking that he was obliged to repeat afterwards at Fulham, and again later at Lambeth. The planning of the works was committed to Mr William Butterfield, whose most important task was the restoration of the Chapel, though that was not accomplished till several years later. This Chapel is an early thirteenth century building, whose chief feature consists in its three lancet windows in the east end. In early ages we read from time to time of the appointment of a chantry chaplain, whose duty it was to offer for the souls of former bishops; the will of Canon William Langeton in 1413 informs us that there were chaplains, clerks, and boys serving in the Chapel; at the beginning of the sixteenth century there is mention of choral services twice daily; and Ordinations were frequently held therein both in ancient and in modern days. By Butterfield the Chapel was thoroughly restored, and fully furnished for purposes of worship.*

Early in 1885 the see of London fell vacant by the death of Bishop Jackson, and such had been Bishop Temple's success at Exeter, and so high was the estimate of his personal qualities, that, though he was now over 63 years of age, the offer of that arduous and responsible post was conveyed to him by Mr Gladstone; and this was followed eleven years later by his elevation to the Primacy, which he held till his death on December 23rd, 1902, at the age of 81. In his promotion Exeter was uniquely honoured, for he was the only one of her Bishops to be translated to London or to Canterbury, though two Deans had attained to the latter dignity—Reginald Pole and William Wake.

How widely contrasted were the two men, who, each for fifteen years, held the episcopate of Exeter in the latter part of the nineteenth century—the one so signally a man of power, of action, of work, and so effectual in promoting the cause of the Church; the other a man of gentleness, of sentiment, of spirituality, so helpful to the souls of men. But they were alike in this, that both gave themselves with

* *Memoirs*, I, 507; Oliver's *Bishops*, 254.

entire and whole-hearted devotion to the cause of religion, and both were markedly sincere and honest and straightforward in the service of their Lord. If Bishop Bickersteth's bodily presence was not so weak or his power of speech so contemptible as in the opinion of some men of Corinth St Paul's were accounted, yet his physique was lacking in robustness, and his utterance, owing to a lisp, was undignified. Nor could he be credited either with the strength that makes a successful chairman, or with the gifts of oratory that betoken "a fine preacher." He gained no high University honours (he took a double third at Trinity, Cambridge), and he never attained to any fame as a scholar. But notwithstanding all this, the clear-sighted Bishop Temple was right in his estimate, when, after their first meeting at the time of the appointment, he remarked to a friend, "That man will do: he is so transparently good." There was his *forte*—his innate and humble piety was so real, that it was impossible to be long in his society without perceiving that "this is a holy man of God." Men recognised this, as they did to an even greater degree in Bishop Edward King, who was consecrated to Lincoln on the same St Mark's Day 1885 in St Paul's Cathedral; and thus he made a deeper and more abiding impression on the spiritual life of his people than if he had been eloquent or learned or of strong character; for, if not specially admired for his talents, he was universally beloved for his goodness.*

Bishop Bickersteth's upbringing and environment had all conduced to foster such a character, for until he went to College he had lived at home, where the whole atmosphere was thoroughly religious. His father, who was Rector of Watton in Hertfordshire and had been Assistant Secretary of the Church Missionary Society, was a very devotional man, a believer in prayer, a lover of the Bible, and an ardent supporter of Evangelical Societies. There, at the age of fourteen, the son experienced his "conversion," and chose his calling. His first experience of country work was gained by him as Curate of Banningham in Norfolk and as Rector of Hinton Martell in Dorset, and that of town work as Vicar

* *Life*, 13, 55, 57.

for thirty years of Christ Church, Hampstead. Meanwhile his services were frequently asked and given in the interest of outside causes—he took part in parochial missions, addressed devotional gatherings of the clergy, read papers at Church Congresses, and served on committees of the Church Missionary Society and other Evangelical Societies, and he was the first to introduce Retreats and Quiet Days among the clergy and laity of his own school of thought. Then came his appointment to the deanery of Gloucester, and almost immediately afterwards (the offer actually came from Mr Gladstone just before his installation) his removal, now at the age of sixty, to succeed Dr Temple as the sixty-first Bishop of Exeter.*

The name of the new Bishop was familiar through the diocese because of his literary productions. Few of his predecessors had signally benefited the Church by their pens; but, if Bartholomew Iscanus and Joseph Hall and Anthony Sparrow all deservedly attained to fame for the good work done in their own ages by their writings, there are two who have left a permanent influence, which will doubtless last as long as the Church of England or the English language—Miles Coverdale through his translation of the Psalms and Edward Henry Bickersteth (who was thrice Seatonian Prizeman at Cambridge) through his hymn, "Peace, perfect peace." His own account of the origin of that hymn is that during a sojourn at Harrogate in the summer of 1875 he heard a sermon preached on Sunday morning in the Parish Church on the text, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee" (Isaiah, XXVI, 3). That afternoon he went out by himself for a moorland walk, and when he came back to tea, he read to his children this hymn, which he had then composed. He had published much else besides it, and some of his books had enjoyed a very great circulation in America as well as at home, the most noteworthy of his other compositions being a poem in twelve books, called *Yesterday, to-day, and for ever*, whose main idea is strongly reminiscent of the great works of Dante and Milton. He had also brought out *From year to year, Hymns and Poems for the Church's Year*, which followed closely the lines that

* *Life*, 1, 4, 7, 10, 16, 19, 22, 31, 53.

John Keble had laid down. *The Master's Home Call*, a memorial of one of his daughters, had very many readers. But the book on which he bestowed most time and study was his *Practical and expository Commentary on the New Testament*, the product of his early years at Hampstead. It was one of the greatest disappointments of his career that, after toiling for ten years at a second edition of the *Commentary*, he had to leave it incomplete on his retirement from Exeter. The loss however is not commensurate with his disappointment, for his *Commentary* was not calculated to appeal to scholars, as he was strongly set against the Revised Version, and stigmatized as " utterly untrustworthy " the Greek text from which our New Testament was translated. But most important of all was his work as editor of *The Hymnal Companion to the Book of Common Prayer*, first issued in 1870, which superseded most other then existing hymnbooks of Evangelical colouring, and which is thus so aptly classified by his biographer :—" It differs from *Hymns Ancient and Modern* in its larger proportion of subjective hymns, and also in its sacramental hymns which aim at a more moderate expression of Eucharistic doctrine." Not himself a musical expert, he secured as musical editors of his third and last edition (1890) Dr C. Vincent, organist of his old church at Hampstead, and Mr D. J. Wood, organist of Exeter Cathedral, who had the assistance of Sir John Stainer.*

Bickersteth's churchmanship was precisely what might be expected from the surroundings and influences among which he grew up. His father, an evangelical of the old-fashioned type, always consorted with men of that school, and they were ever-welcome visitors at Watton. At Cambridge his religious life developed under the guidance of William Carus and Professor Scholefield. At Hampstead he was always associated with men of the Evangelical Alliance type and the Church Missionary Society. It was natural therefore that he should set himself against the teachings of the Tractarians, and that in selecting materials for his *Hymnal Companion* he should shun all that emphasized sacramental doctrine, and should even modify the expressions

* *Life*, 99, 100, 113, 118, 120, 125, 129, 200.

of such well-known hymns as "We love the place, O God," and "O God, unseen, yet ever near." It was but natural, too, that he should figure as a staunch Protestant, ever ready to protest against the "deadly errors of the fallen Church of Rome," or "that corrupt and fallen Church," confident that there could never be any possibility of re-union, and supporting Missions that sought to convert Roman Catholics in Ireland from their false tenets and pernicious practices.*

But the Bishop was no narrow-minded bigot, and, though he held his own opinions quite firmly, he was willing to be on friendly terms with Churchmen of other schools of thought, provided that they were free from suspicion of Romanizing. True, he would not bestow promotion on men who were decidedly advanced—and there was considerable resentment that he left unhonoured the venerable and generally venerated Vicar of St Peter's, Plymouth, and author of the hymn, "Jesu, meek and gentle"—but he was not really a partizan, and the majority of those whom he promoted were not of his own school of thought. Furthermore, the soundness of his churchmanship was evidenced in one of his sayings—it occurs in an allocution delivered at the Diocesan Conference of 1886—"the Lord's Day demands the Lord's Supper." †

As a diocesan he was a diligent visitor, so diligent that he made personal acquaintance with 450 of the 510 parishes in his diocese. In thus going out to his people, however, he was doing nothing unusual—except perhaps that few could have shown so full a record in fifteen years. But what was exceptional was the extent to which he brought the people to himself—to the Palace and to the Cathedral—in Exeter. His was a marvellous exercise of hospitality, for each year he invited an enormous party of guests, and sometimes the number would reach a thousand. He began with the Churchwardens—all those of the whole diocese—and it was a fitting and gratifying recognition of their important and gratuitous office to receive an invitation from the Lord Bishop to spend an afternoon with him, each one bringing his lady with him. The programme included

* *Life*, 32; *Report of Ch. Cong.* 1894, 16.

† *Life*, 194; *Report of Ch. Cong.* 1894, 23; *G. R. Prynne*, 197.

luncheon and tea, served in the Palace grounds, as well as a service in the Cathedral with an address by the Bishop, and freedom to wander as they pleased about the buildings and the gardens. Other classes of Church-workers were similarly honoured—Lay Readers, Organists, Choristers, Bell-ringers, Sunday School Teachers, Day School Teachers. Nor was the line drawn at Church-workers or even at Church members, for invitations were sent to Hospital Nurses, to Policemen, to Railway Employees, and to Aged Persons; and one year the Bishop's broadmindedness prompted him to bid as his guests the Nonconformist Ministers of the county, of whom more than two hundred came. He was not sanguine of corporate Home Re-union, and he was not one to gloze over differences in doctrine and polity; but in his speech to those Ministers he manifested his normal freedom from bigotry, and his readiness to acknowledge what was right and good in them. "We do not meet to-day," he said, "to express conformity in Church discipline, for therein we differ in many things. But we do meet to evidence our confraternity in the fundamental verities of the everlasting Gospel, for therein we are one and shall be one for ever. Wherein we differ, we desire, as the inspired Apostle beseeches us, with all lowliness and meekness and long suffering to forbear one another in love. And wherein we are one, we are endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace; for we know there is one body, and one Spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in us all. And we recognise that to each there is given grace according to the measure of the gift of God." *

Bishop Bickersteth, who shared the opinion that "the Cathedral ought to be the centre of Church life in a diocese," enjoyed an exceptional opportunity of carrying into effect some of the suggestions of his predecessor, for in the course of two years he had in his hands the appointment of all the four residentiary canons of his Cathedral. To these four he assigned "four great departments of work" (as he expressed it) to be stimulated and fostered by being committed

* *Life*, 65, 67, 211; *Report of Dioc. Conf.* 1888.

to their especial charge. The functions of each were carefully defined by himself as :—" (1) The education of children and young persons, in all ranks of Society, on Scriptural and distinctively Church lines. (2) The deepening of religious life by Parochial Missions and Quiet Days. (3) The promotion of Missions to Heathen and Moslem lands and to Israel. (4) The cultivation of Pastoral Theology."

As Canon and " Minister of Education " he made choice of Ernest Grey Sandford, the Vicar of Cornwood, who in early days had been domestic chaplain to Bishop Temple, and who in later times was offered, but refused, the post of Suffragan Bishop under his old chief in London. To his duties as Archdeacon of Exeter there was added the arduous work of acting as leader in the directing of the Diocesan Training College for Schoolmasters and the Diocesan Inspection of Schools, and the managing of the Church Reading Society and the Sunday School Association, as well as the general encouragement of religious education in upper grade and middle class and elementary schools. The second appointment was that of Charles Isaac Atherton, who was brought into the city from his little country living of Farringdon, in order that as a Cathedral Canon he might give himself wholly to the work of Diocesan Missioner, rallying round him as occasional assistants a band of clergymen of the diocese. Six years later the Bishop was able to state with pride that this band—known as the Parochial Mission Society—had grown to the number of sixty ; and they proved their usefulness by mission preaching, and by delivering in many a parish courses of sermons, especially in Advent and Lent ; nor is it yet forgotten how the Warden of the Society used to attract crowds of working men to listen to his simple and popular preaching. Delightful and beneficial, too, was it for priests of quiet and remote parishes to be brought out into the world, and sent as missioners to speak to congregations larger and more enlightened than their own. Other undertakings included in the same department were the St Andrew's Deaconess Home, whose admirable function it has been to train and send forth deaconesses as assistants to incumbents in the diocese ; and the Society of St Peter—

a small body of clergymen, ready to be put in charge of parishes during vacanices or the illness of incumbents. The third choice fell upon Robert Edward Trefusis, who closed a twenty-two years' vicariate at Chittlehampton to settle in Exeter in order to watch over and foster the furtherance of foreign mission interests in the diocese. So whole-hearted was his devotion to duty and so generally was he esteemed, that he was afterwards honoured by being selected as Assistant Bishop, and was consecrated in St Paul's Cathedral in 1897 with the title of Bishop of Crediton—a reminiscence of the see where the Devonshire diocesans ruled in pre-Exeter times; thus taking the place of Bishop G. W. H. Knight-Bruce (formerly of Bloemfontein), who had for two years been acting as Coadjutor, but had died in the previous December. The fourth to be appointed Canon was Herbert Barnes, Archdeacon of Barnstaple and Rector of Langtree, who became a virtual Professor of Pastoral Theology with the *rôle* of counselling ordinands, and also the recently ordained, in their studies and sermonizing and ministerial duties. He lived only a year to fill that post, and was succeeded by Walter John Edmonds, a former Church Missionary Society's missionary in India, who was well known as an official of the British and Foreign Bible Society—his merits being recognised by the conferring of the B.D. degree upon him by Archbishop Tait. These four continued in office till the end of this episcopate, and the great influence and value of their respective works amply justified the experiment, and showed the wisdom and prescience of him who organized it all.*

The office of Dean, during practically the whole of this episcopate, was held by Dr Benjamin Morgan Cowie, who had gained the highest distinction at St John's College, Cambridge, as Senior Wrangler, and held honourable position as Dean of Manchester and Prolocutor in the York Convocation before being preferred to spend his declining years in the less exacting post at Exeter. When he died there at the age of eighty-two, he was succeeded by Alfred Earle, who retired

* *Life*, 63, 87; *Diocesan Kalendar* of 1890, 189; *Report of Ch. Cong.* 1894, 16, 17.

from the active duties of an Assistant Bishop in London (with the title of Bishop of Marlborough) to return to familiar haunts in his old diocese; but when he arrived, Bishop Bickersteth was already arranging for his resignation of the see.

Church work in the diocese at this period was characterized by patient and constant performance of duty rather than by the introduction of novel methods: consolidation rather than display was what was aimed at and accomplished. This was manifested—so far as statistics are indicative—in the Bishop's closing speech at the Diocesan Conference of 1900, when he stated that his confirmees had numbered 100,000 (an annual average of about 6,500), his ordinands were 306 deacons and 331 priests (20 and 22 per annum), incumbents instituted 528, and curates licensed 948. He might have added that the staff of Lay Readers had grown to the goodly number of 71, and that he had consecrated 11 new churches. Of these eleven, one was in his Cathedral city—Emmanuel; two were in the Three Towns—St Matthias's at Plymouth and St Barnabas's at Stoke Damarel; and one was at Torquay—Holy Trinity. Other town churches were Christ Church and St Andrew's at Paignton, St John the Evangelist's at Bridgetown, and St Peter's at Bideford. The rest were the new parish churches of Budleigh Salterton and Horrabridge, and the one built by the Reverend H. G. Heaven, proprietor and incumbent of Lundy Island, whose normal population is about thirty, so that its church, with seating accommodation for 150, is never likely to be filled again, as it was at its consecration on June 17th, 1897.

Great undertakings were not attempted in that period—indeed there was hardly scope for such, after the many achievements of the two previous episcopates—except that one considerable advance was planned. A comprehensive scheme for Church Extension in the Three Towns was inaugurated by Bishop Bickersteth, though the accomplishment had to be left for his successors. The initial meeting was held in Plymouth in 1897, when the Bishop set forth that the population of the 27 parishes of the deanery totalled at least 170,000, but that all the churches, chapels-of-ease, and

licensed mission-halls would not provide accommodation for 30,000, and that therefore it was proposed to build six or seven additional churches. He was happy to be able to announce that already four sites had been given, so that an encouraging start was made.*

It was a strange experience for the diocese to be deprived of its chief pastor for five months ; but this actually happened in the year 1891, when the Bishop paid a visit to Japan, going by way of Canada and returning by China. He had always been a hearty and most generous supporter of the missionary cause, chiefly through the Church Missionary Society, though helping also the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, under whose auspices his eldest son Edward had worked for ten years in India as the founder and head of the Cambridge Mission to Delhi. That son was now Bishop of Tokyo, and it was with the object of seeing him and also encouraging other missionaries that the father undertook the journey to Japan. Meanwhile the diocese of Exeter was left under the charge of Bishop Alfred Barry, who had been one year junior to Bishop Bickersteth at Trinity, and had recently resigned the bishopric of Sydney and the primacy of the Church in Australia. At Exeter he was long remembered for the masterly ability which he displayed in presiding over the Diocesan Conference.†

The holding of the Church Congress at Exeter was a great event for the diocese. Once before—in 1876—Devonshire had been thus honoured, the place chosen being Plymouth ; and now, in 1894, the thirty-fourth Congress assembled in the Cathedral city. Naturally all such gatherings are very much alike, but there are some details that mark the Exeter Congress as memorable. One such feature was the wide-spread interest that was evinced throughout the diocese. In addition to the regulation programme, the preceding Sunday was observed as Congress Sunday, when special sermons were preached in the Cathedral and as many as 167 churches, and offerings (amounting to £507) made for sundry Church purposes—chiefly Religious Education and

* *Diocesan Kalendar*, 1898.

† *Life*, 32, 82, 154.

Church Defence. During the Congress week Working-men's Meetings—all well attended—were also arranged in populous centres, *viz.*, Plymouth, Devonport, Torquay, Barnstaple, Bideford, Ilfracombe, Tiverton, and Exmouth, addresses being delivered by Congress speakers. Again, a much approved innovation was the conducting of the Devotional Meeting in the Cathedral instead of in the Congress Hall—an arrangement that has set a precedent for other Congresses. Furthermore, so successful were the financial plans that though the great sum of £4,200 was guaranteed for expenses, it was not necessary to make any call on the fund; but, on the contrary, there was a surplus of £63, which was given to help the providing of a Church House in Exeter.*

One of the most noteworthy passages in the Bishop's Presidential Address at the Church Congress was that in which he spoke of compulsory retirement of superannuated and disabled clergymen. "No departmental authorities, military or civil, would tolerate men retaining responsible posts, which demand active service, when they can no longer discharge the duties appertaining to those posts. In our Navy and Army officers are obliged to retire at a certain age according to their rank. No manager of a bank, no director of a railway, no surgeon or physician of a hospital holds on to his place when superannuated or disabled. But if all clergymen of all ranks, bishops, deans, archdeacons, canons, incumbents, curates, were obliged to resign at three score years and ten, *unless* they could produce a medical certificate from a nominated physician in the diocese, that they appeared fully able to continue their episcopal or clerical work for the next twelve months, a certificate to be renewed year by year, it would relieve the Church from many burdens, and promotions would be healthily accelerated. Those who resigned would pass from the executive to the consultative ranks of the clergy; and not a few would easily claim and annually renew their certificate of health and strength until they passed four score years and more, and haply their last works would be among their fruitfullest and best." The

* *Report of Ch. Cong.* 1894; *Diocesan Kalendar*, 1895, preface, 192.

vision of a procession of elderly clergymen filing before the panel doctor, each one anxious to appear hale and hearty, appealed to the members of the Congress as comic, and they had a hearty laugh ; but there was wisdom in the suggestion, and the Bishop's words were weighty. Maybe, the idea is too Utopian to be exactly fulfilled ; but his Lordship was loyal to it himself, and when he recognised that age was incapacitating him for his duties, he sent his resignation to the Archbishop, and before the close of 1900 bade farewell to his diocese. Gradually his mental powers grew weaker, and after five years' retirement in London his gentle spirit departed on May 16th, 1906, and his body was laid in the churchyard of his early home at Watton.*

* *Life*, 171, 178 ; *Report of Ch. Cong.* 1894, 18.

CHAPTER XXIII.

CHURCHES AND THEIR TREASURES.

THERE are many English Cathedrals that surpass Exeter both in historic interest and importance, and also in size—for its extreme length is only 415 feet; but among those of second rank Exeter Cathedral may be accorded a foremost place, and as to internal beauty it is eclipsed by none. In former chapters we have noticed sufficiently the structure and its history, so that we now need only to advert to its characteristic features, which mark it out as specially admirable. Such are its symmetrical design, and the wonderful harmony which pervades the whole. Consequently, while the main portion is of the Decorated style, no jarring effect is caused either by the Norman of the transeptal towers and the Early English of other pre-existing parts, or by the Perpendicular insertions of later date. Indeed, so skilfully have they all been welded together, that the beauty of the Decorated work is rather enhanced than diminished by the juxtaposition. Particularly remarkable, too, are the great square clusters of columns of blue purbeck marble, the richness of the red and brown and cream-coloured stonework, the unbroken range of the vaulted roof with its handsomely carved bosses, the grace and beauty of the tall canopy of the episcopal throne, and the lovely tracery of the windows, whose patterns are so varied that (with one exception) no two are alike in the whole of either side of the edifice.

As the successor of the Cathedral of the ancient diocese, the Church of the Holy Cross at Crediton enjoys special dignity and importance. But besides, it is a noble edifice, measuring 228 feet in length, cruciform in shape, with aisles and clerestories and a massive central tower of early style. The Lady Chapel at the east end is early Decorated, but the five-bayed choir and the six-bayed nave were mostly rebuilt

in the Perpendicular age. With its ample staff of clergy and its generous endowments this collegiate foundation was famous and influential throughout the mediaeval period; and partly on that account, partly because one of the chief episcopal manors was there, Crediton Church was frequently selected by the Bishops of Exeter for the holding of Ordinations. Edward VI altered its constitution, placing it under the rule of twelve Governors; and, though it has lost much of its former ornate glory, it is still an edifice of impressive grandeur—impressive within for the rich red of the stonework of local felspathic trap, and without for its two tiers of large Perpendicular windows, its battlemented walls, and its spacious pinnacled tower.*

The other great collegiate church that still exists, Ottery St Mary, was almost entirely the creation of Bishop Grandisson's genius and generosity. From the Canons of Rouen Cathedral he obtained by purchase the manor of Ottery, which was co-extensive with the parish; and the parochial church, which had been consecrated eighty years before, he rebuilt on grander and more ambitious lines. The five years occupied by this task (1337-1342) synchronized with the full activity of his building operations on the nave of Exeter Cathedral, and it is remarkable how close is the similarity of the two edifices. Naturally, the church is smaller than the cathedral—it is not quite half as long, and its choir and nave have each five bays instead of seven—but otherwise the plans are almost exactly alike, especially in that most noteworthy respect, the transeptal towers; though, whereas Quivel had opened out the bases of the Cathedral towers so as to form transepts, at Ottery Grandisson erected his new towers on the already existing transepts. Even in some striking details the resemblance is carried on. Exeter possessed a curious astronomical clock of great dimensions (it is still there at work in the north transept), so Ottery must have one of somewhat similar design; and the consecration crosses on the outside of the south wall of the Cathedral were reproduced, though of more ornate character, for the church, which has thirteen without and eight within. The

* *N. Devon Churches*, 71.

likeness, however, is not quite so close now as it was, for the Dorset aisle with beautiful fan groining was built on to the north of Ottery's nave early in the sixteenth century; and, while Exeter still retains its stone roodscreen, its fellow has disappeared from the church.

For the establishing of his College Grandisson secured a bull from Pope Clement VI, King Edward III giving his consent; and he provided a full staff, almost as numerous as the clerics of Crediton, consisting of eight canons, four of whom must be priests (Warden, Minister, Precentor, and Sacrist), and the others subdeacons at the least, together with eight priest vicars and three other priests. Besides these there were also eight clerks or secondaries, eight chorister boys, two church clerks, two holy-water clerks, and a grammar-school master—a total of forty persons. The College was granted the appropriations of Ilsington, Northam, and Ipplepen, and seems to have been wealthy and prosperous, until constrained to surrender its possessions to the King in 1545 as a consequence of the Act passed in that year.

Historically St German's is to be ranked with Crediton, both churches being successors of old cathedrals; and, though now reduced to inferior size, the former retains more of its ancient fabric, and, indeed, is a comprehensive study in architecture. When the Regular Canons of the Order of St Augustine were introduced to take the place of their irregular and unsatisfactory predecessors, they at once set about rebuilding their church in more stately fashion; and this new edifice, in late Norman style, was completed about the close of the twelfth century. The parish was the largest in Cornwall; so the nave, which served as the parochial church, was a spacious one with aisles, being just over a hundred feet in length; and afterwards there was added to it a choir, for the use of the Canons, which was consecrated by Bishop Bronescombe in 1261. Exactly a century later Grandisson consecrated a newly erected chapel, forming the east end of the south aisle—apparently built to contain the chief and recently acquired relic, *viz.*, an arm-bone of St German of Auxerre. The choir disappeared soon after the Dissolution, and the north aisle has gone too; but most of the

rest has been preserved, including a handsome Norman western portico with receding archway of seven orders, and flanking towers, whose lower portions are of the same style.*

Among the other churches of the diocese the chief is St Andrew's, the mother-church of Plymouth, a grand and typical example of local Perpendicular style, with seating accommodation for 1,800. Its pinnacled tower is one of the finest in the west; but unfortunately its screens were removed a hundred years ago, and together with other woodwork sold by auction for the paltry sum of £135. Its only rival in capacity is Falmouth Church, seating only a hundred fewer; but that is of a debased Perpendicular, belonging to the reign of Charles II, who with his brother James provided most of the expense, the dedication being "King Charles the Martyr." Tavistock and Launceston are strongly reminiscent of St Andrew's, Plymouth, with their tall granite pillars and waggon roofs, and their loss of all their old woodwork and coloured glass. But their western towers are older than that of St Andrew's, that at Tavistock being a particularly fine example of a tower standing on four open arches, and that at Launceston having formerly been detached, though it is now united to the church by a modern vestry. The latter church was built by Sir Henry Trecarrell at a late date (1524-1540), and he made the exterior very ornate with carved granite designs and inscriptions.

Tiverton, Cullompton, and Totnes are all fine Perpendicular churches. The first is an imposing edifice, with a clerestory (not ancient), and ornamented niches carved in the pillars, which make the interior look very rich. Totnes is unique in possessing a lofty stone screen elaborately and delicately carved. Cullompton's screen stretches right across the church, as Totnes's does, and it is an exquisite example of coloured woodwork in perfect condition. High above it is a rood-beam, which must have supported the top of the rood; for there is still preserved a Golgotha—a wooden carving of a mound of rock, bestrewn with skulls and bones, and containing mortice holes for the rood and attendant figures. This was removed from the top of the screen

* *County Churches—Cornwall*, 105; *Archit. Hist. of St German's.*

in the sixteenth century, and is now kept in the tower. This tower, of red sandstone with clustered pinnacles, is one of the handsomest in the county: it was not finished till 1549, and has a carving of a crucifix, and figures of St George and Edward VI. Other principal churches are Plympton St Mary, partly Decorated and partly Perpendicular, with an impressive tower; Ilfracombe, which has a series of curiously grotesque creatures as roof corbels in the nave, and whose massive Norman tower is on the north side; and the spacious Great Torrington, a Commonwealth church, built in 1651 to take the place of one that was blown up by an explosion of gunpowder during the Civil War.

In Cornwall the finest church is that at Bodmin, with arcades of nine bays and waggon roof and quaintly carved bench-ends. Its roodscreen was cast out a century and a half ago, but an unusual feature remains—two parvise chambers, one above the other, over the south porch. St Mary's at Truro was a good example of west country Perpendicular, but it has given place to the Cathedral, preserving, however, its south aisle, which continues to serve as the parish church.

St Buryan has a special interest, inasmuch as it was one of the only two chartered sanctuaries in the diocese, Padstow being the other and the less famous. In both these cases the right was granted by Athelstan, and at St Buryan there still exist one or two of the boundary crosses, which were usually set up about a mile and a half from the church, and marked the sanctuary within which a refugee might be safe for his lifetime. Those two places therefore would be resorted to much more than ordinary churches or chapels, all of which, indeed, together with their churchyards had rights of sanctuary; but the protection afforded by those was limited to forty days, at the end of which a refugee must either submit himself to legal trial, or must quit the realm, travelling directly by the king's highway to the nearest port, clad in sackcloth and carrying a cross in his hand. In the Middle Ages, when crimes were rife, the usual punishment was hanging, even for petty theft; and the seeking of sanctuary was very frequently resorted to, the practical effect—

besides the confiscation of the man's chattels to the King —being the substitution of lifelong banishment for capital punishment. The privileges of sanctuary were much curtailed in the reign of Henry VIII, and in 1623 the right was abolished for criminals.*

A number of good churches have been erected in modern times. One of the earliest is Heavitree (1846) in the Perpendicular style, with a stately tower added long after. St James-the-Great is a spacious building, whose spire of 145 feet is an ornament to Devonport (1850). Fitzford Chapel-of-ease at Tavistock is remarkable for its Lombardo-Venetian character, with its huge pointed tower, built at the expense of the 8th Duke of Bedford (1867). Even more impressive is the splendid 220 feet spire of St Michael's at Exeter, a church that was the £20,000 gift of Mr William Gibbs (1868). Local marble has been lavished on St Mary Church (1861) and on Babbacombe (1874), the latter designed by William Butterfield. More recent structures are three at Exeter—St Matthew's and St James's, the one in Early English and the other in early Decorated by R. Medley Fulford, and St David's in novel style by W. D. Caroë with a very successful chancel. Besides these mention should be made of G. H. F. Prynne's noble edifices of Holy Trinity Church at Exmouth and St Peter's at Plymouth.

Of Celtic structures there is nothing extant except the ruined chapels at Madron and St Gwithian and Perranzabulo and St Clether, and remains of others at Carn Brea and Cape Cornwall—both in the parish of St Just-in-Penwith; and possibly some work at Rame Head and at Meeworth in Millbrook may belong to that age. Nor is there much that is Saxon: the crypt of Sidbury Church (one of the only six Saxon ones in England), the north side of Tintagel and parts of the chancel, some masonry at Laneast and St Clether and St Stephen's-by-Launceston, traces of the ground-plan at St Breward, a few fonts in various places, and the carved tympanum in the porch of Down St Mary—these are the chief claimants of that period. There is more Norman work in

* *Trans. of Devon. Assoc.*, XLV, 302; *Devon Notes and Queries*, VIII, 49.

the two counties; but even this is quite uncommon, if we except the numerous fonts—about 123 in Devonshire and over 80 in Cornwall. The fact, however, that so many fonts are still preserved is proof that the Norman period was a time of wide-spread building activity: indeed, it was then that our parochial system came into being, and that age saw the founding of the churches of most of our ancient parishes. Most conspicuous of all are the towers of the Cathedral, but St Mary Arches at Exeter is the one church whose nave retains both its Norman arcades, taking its name from its arches, which stand on plain round columns of late date with square capitals. In East Devon we find a tower of this period at Sidbury, and walls at Axmouth, and pillars and arches at Membury. There are Norman doorways at thirty or forty places in Devon (noteworthy ones at Axminster, Bishop's Teignton, Bradford, East Worlington, Highampton, Shebbear, Stockleigh Pomeroy, Thornbury, and Tiverton); Meavy is partly of that date; and there are carved tympana at Bishop's Teignton, Bondleigh, Chulmleigh, and Hollacombe, and piscinas at Luppitt, Petrockstowe, and Trusham. Cornwall can boast of having more, such as the grand west doorway and the lower parts of the towers at St German's, the north arcades at Morwenstow and St Breward, an arch at Lelant, doorways at Caerhays, Cury (2), Kilkhampton, Landewednack, Manaccan, and half-a-dozen other places, and also as many carved tympana elsewhere.

The major part even of Early English and of Decorated work has been obliterated by the great wave of church rebuilding activity in the Perpendicular period. However, in Devonshire the following churches of the former style still remain, either wholly or in main part:—Aveton Giffard, Brent Tor, Cookbury, Ermington, Honeychurch, Sampford Peverell, Stoke Fleming, Tetcott; and worthy of note, too, are the arcading in the Lady Chapel of the Cathedral, the older parts of Ottery St Mary, and much at Branscombe, Haccombe, Holsworthy, Kingsbridge, Mortehoe, and Pyworthy. In Cornwall this style is but poorly represented. There are Early English churches at St Cubert and St Anthony-in-Roseland (though the latter is a restoration of last century);

and besides there are the west front of Talland, the north arcade of St Minver, transepts at St Adwena and St Levan, much of the fabric of Lelant, and portions of other edifices. The case is much the same with the Decorated style. Apart from the Cathedral and the churches of Bratton Clovelly, Denbury, Hollacombe, Ottery St Mary, Tawstock, Townstal, and West Ogwell, there is but little east of the Tamar; and there is even less in the west—chiefly the church of St Agnes, the admirable tower of Lostwithiel, and the chancels of St Ive and Sheviock.

What an active age must the Perpendicular period have been in this part of England! The great majority of the churches in the Exeter diocese were rebuilt at that time, and of the rest there are hardly any that did not undergo alteration or receive some addition. The west country Perpendicular is marked by its own characteristic features, which are not all like those in other parts, and which become more general and more pronounced as we draw nearer to the Land's End. The usual material is granite, which is frequently used even for pillars and window-tracery, though in East Devon flint is common enough, and also in the Exeter region the delightfully rich red sandstone. The normal design comprises a chancel and nave of equal height and (at least in the west) without a chancel arch; together with north and south aisles, which in many cases are of the same length as the chancel and nave, so that the east end is all in one straight line. There is also a tower beyond the west end of the nave, terminating in battlements and tall crocketed pinnacles, and provided with a doorway in its western face. A porch is added, generally on the south side, but occasionally also on the north, sometimes with a parvise chamber above; but there are no transepts, and no structural chapels—with rare exceptions; and the vestries that are now so general, have mostly been built in modern times. Mr John Stabb declares that "there is no doubt that almost every church in Devonshire at one time possessed its rood screen and loft." He was writing then of the one county only, but his words apply equally to both, and the common occurrence of structural staircases in the thickness of the wall is a standing witness

to the truth of his statement. The Perpendicular church is generally low, and it has no clerestory: exceptions in Devonshire are the clerestories at Crediton, Cullompton, and North and South Molton (those at Tiverton and Poltimore are late additions, while Ottery St Mary and Pyworthy are not examples of that style), and in Cornwall, Callington, St German's, Lostwithiel, and Fowey. Other characteristics are the round waggon roof with wooden ribs and carved bosses; the level floor—the altar being raised but little above the nave; the large east window (which leaves but a shallow wall-space over the altar); and the rich and sometimes grotesque carving of the squared bench-ends. It is not every Perpendicular church that has both aisles (the north is more common than the south), and there are even some small ones that have none; but in a few instances an extra aisle or chapel has been added to a complete church—such as the Lane aisle at Cullompton and the Greenway chapel at Tiverton, both of which, like the Dorset aisle at Ottery St Mary, have admirable fan-vaulted roofs. Similar extensions at Stoke Damarel have resulted in the destroying of the proportions of the church, its width being greater than its proper length.

Of church towers the most impressive, both for position and for structure, is the four-storied one at Hartland; but Chittlehampton, with its many-pinnacled buttresses and its large belfry windows, is generally considered to deserve the palm for beauty, though surpassed in height by Probus and the graceful (but modern) Holy Trinity, Barnstaple (125 feet). Wydecombe is *facile princeps* among those of Dartmoor, and, besides those already mentioned, Kenton and Totnes and St Austell are remarkable for their beauty and size, the special feature of the last being a number of niches containing images. Though Devonshire has none, there are in Cornwall as many as six towers standing detached from their churches—Gunwalloe, Gwennap, Lamorran, St Feock, St Mylor, and Talland. The old architects were wont to set towers only—not spires—on hilly ground, but they have given us eleven spires in the South Hams, Malborough and Modbury being the most conspicuous; and there are six in North

Devon—Barnstaple, Ashford, Braunton, Swymbridge, Bishops Tawton (of stone), and West Worlington ; besides a few others in various parts, such as Hatherleigh and North Tawton, low spires on the towers of Ottery St Mary and Sidbury, and the seventeenth century examples of Great Torrington (rebuilt) and Charles' at Plymouth. Cornwall can boast of about a dozen old, besides two or three modern spires, the chief being Menheniot, Lostwithiel, St Agnes, and St Minver. Hollacombe near Holsworthy and Combe Pyne are noteworthy for their saddleback towers, and the former is also possessed of a turret for a *sanctus* bell.

Although bellringing was already an ancient institution in the west in the latter part of the thirteenth century, yet the earliest bellfounders who can be traced in the diocese were the firm of de Ropforde of Paignton. There were three generations engaged in the craft, and Roger de Ropforde's son William and grandson Robert were employed by Bishop Quivel and his Chapter in 1284 to make four bells for the north tower of the Cathedral, besides repairing the organ and the clock. Doubtless their metal survives, though not their actual handiwork, the oldest existing bells being those of Robert Norton of Exeter of the time of Henry VI, and others of the unidentified " i. t." of about the same time. There are extant 22 bells of the former maker, and 33 of the latter. Other west country founders were Thomas and John Pennington of Exeter, whose earliest bell is one of 1618 at Eggesford, and whose family continued at the work till 1763. Theirs is a famous name, and others of the clan were settled at Lezant and Stoke Climsland (1710-1818). Both firms turned out a large number of bells, and even now Devonshire churches possess 174 by the former and 480 by the latter. Later contemporaries were Thomas Bilbie of Cullompton and his son Thomas Castleman Bilbie, to whom Devon owes 352 bells ; and they were succeeded by William Pannell, whose bells number 54. A name of wider renown is that of Taylor—the brothers William and John set up at Buckland Brewer in 1825, and afterwards removed to Loughborough. To their account are to be placed 115 of our bells, and 154 to the well known firm of Mears of Whitechapel.

Devonshire still retains 276 pre-Reformation bells, and Cornwall 45. These represent a very small proportion of the totals of the earlier period, as is evident from the fact that the Commissioners of Edward VI found 1,645 in Devon, without reckoning those in the city of Exeter. But bells are liable to crack, if not hung and handled skilfully, and then there is no alternative to melting and recasting them, so that the disparity in numbers is perhaps not extraordinary. The mediaeval rule was that the complement for a parish church was a set of three bells, and it is noticeable that a considerable number of churches still have three and no more. In some instances, such as Ashcombe and Butterleigh and Combe Raleigh, the ancient three bells are yet to be seen occupying their original cages or frames. Other places that preserve their mediaeval sets of three are Brushford and Wembworthy, Highampton and Honeychurch.

There are now 2,679 bells in the Exeter diocese, belonging to 595 churches and chapels, and 1,093 in 252 of the Truro diocese. These figures show a large advance since the year 1866, when the Reverend H. T. Ellacombe found that Devonshire possessed 2,248 bells, and Cornwall (though his returns were not quite complete) 888. In his time the only ring of ten was that of the Cathedral (raised to that number in 1729), and of peals of eight there were only 19 in Devonshire and 8 in Cornwall ; whereas now Truro Cathedral, Cullompton, St Sidwell's at Exeter, and St Andrew's and Charles' Churches at Plymouth have ten each, and there are 59 rings of eight in the former county and 26 in the latter, while the 137 sets of six in Devonshire have grown to 209, and there are 88 in Cornwall.

The oldest ring of eight is that at St Peter's, Tiverton, dating from 1736 ; but for quality first rank must be allowed to Exeter Cathedral, Pilton, Tavistock, Plympton St Mary, and St Sidwell's, Exeter. The Cathedral is uniquely fortunate, for not only are its bells the heaviest peal hung to ring in the world, but the ninth and the tenth are as perfect as bells can be made. The former, known as " Stafford," was cast in 1676 by Thomas Purdue of Bristol, who happily chanced to turn out the bell with its harmonics in perfect tune. The

tenor, "Grandisson,"—so named after the Bishop who gave it—was recast in 1729 and again in 1902; and—the improved art of tuning bells having been discovered by Canon Simpson, and carried into effect by Taylor of Loughborough and afterwards by other bellfounders—it also has its harmonics perfectly correct. This excellent bell weighs 72 cwt. Furthermore, the Cathedral possesses an extra fourth, cast in 1630 by T. Pennington, and called "Pongamouth." It is a half-tone bell, and, as a variety from the Grandisson peal of ten, a beautiful octave can be produced in the minor key by using "Pongamouth" as the third and "Stafford" as the tenor. This is known as the Stafford peal, and it is useful, too, in a pretty six, designated the Cobthorne peal. These eleven are all hung in the south tower, but in the north tower there is still another, "Great Peter," which was presented to his Cathedral by Bishop Peter Courtenay. It was recast by Thomas Purdue in 1676, and is an immense bell, weighing 6¼ tons, with a diameter of 6 ft. 4 in. It is not hung for ringing, but is tolled for early services and for the daily curfew, and the clock strikes the hours on it. It is interesting to note that Exeter Close can boast of containing both the heaviest and also the lightest peal in the kingdom, the 6 bells of St Petrock's Church answering the latter description.

The two best bells in the diocese are considered to be "Stafford" in the Cathedral peal, and the tenor at Plympton St Mary, which was also the creation of Thomas Purdue. Another beautiful bell is Pilton's tenor, cast in 1712 by Abraham Rudhall of Gloucester. The most curious bell, unique except for one other on the continent, is that which is now used as the market bell at Bodmin, but which formerly belonged to the Franciscan Friary at that place. It is a small bell, only 16 inches in diameter, but its peculiarity is that its surface consists of alternate ridges and hollows, which encircle the bell, being arranged horizontally.

Tubular bells have not gained any widespread popularity in this part of the country. Indeed, the old churches and chapels are so generally provided with the genuine article that it is reasonable that there should be neither need nor scope for the substitute. And as to new foundations, with

the exception of those that can afford to be ambitious, the great majority have contented themselves with one or perhaps two of the conventional type. However, one ancient church—West Anstey—has a set of 8 tubular bells in its tower; and a few modern churches have done likewise, Ellacombe and All Saints' at Torre having 8 each, Newlyn by Penzance 5, and Pendeen 10.

On the whole these two counties are wonderfully well and richly endowed with bells—largely due to the happy circumstance that the diocese has had so many able bell-founders of its own; and the fact that the average number of bells for a Devonshire church is nearly 5, and over 4 for a Cornish one, is sufficient indication of the interest and generosity of churchmen, which have been quickened and encouraged by the Devonshire Guild of Ringers, founded in 1873 by the Reverend J. L. L. Fulford (the first Secretary) and Mr Charles Troyte of Huntsham Court (the first President—now worthily succeeded by the Reverend Maitland Kelly of Kelly).

The destruction of stone altars in the sixteenth century was not completely effected, and a number are still extant, especially in Cornwall, which can claim to possess at least twenty-six. A large part of what is believed to have been Stapeldon's original *mensa* of the high altar in the Cathedral is now in use in St Gabriel's Chapel, and another has been recognised in the pavement beneath the roodscreen. The ornate example in Hartland Church is merely a modern piecing together of carved stones from the Abbey; but recently there has been unearthed there in the churchyard a genuine slab, incised with five crosses. Another is in North Huish Church, and an ancient one of slate has been replaced at Bradford. Similar restorations have taken place at East Phillack, St Columb Major, and Tywardreath; and other noteworthy altar-stones are that in the side chapel or vestry at Tintagel, one at Towednack—said to date from about the ninth century, and the inscribed stone in the chancel at Camborne. St Michael Penkevil has not only two ancient altar-slabs, but also the original foundation stone with its inscription.

In no department are the far-reaching effects of the spoliation of the sixteenth century more apparent than as regards Church plate. Almost without exception, all the holy vessels anterior to that time have disappeared ; and those that survived the alienations of Henrician days and the confiscations of the Edwardian inquisitors, fell victims to the reforming zeal of the Puritans of the next generation, or the religious upheaval of the Commonwealth period, or the well-meaning but mistaken ambitions of later incumbents and churchwardens. One exception, however, is Combe Pyne, which has benefited by its very remoteness and insignificance, and retains its pre-Reformation silver of about 1500 A.D. Cofton has a pre-Reformation chalice. Ipplepen, too, claims to possess a chalice coeval with its Perpendicular church. In Cornwall an ancient silver chalice is to be found at St Mabe, and at St Kea a silver-gilt chalice and paten of French design and workmanship, dating from the early part of the sixteenth century. Handsomest of all is a silver chalice, over a foot high, which was presented to Saltash Church in 1624, but is the work of an English maker of the time of Henry VII. Do we seek for more ? The quest were vain, save for the thirteenth century chalice and paten that have been abstracted from the tomb of Bishop Bytton, and are now on view in the Chapter Library ; and a similar example of mediaeval plate—also sepulchral—at Haccombe.

The most characteristic type of the existing holy vessels in the west country is the Ions pattern—from the workshop of John Ions, a goldsmith of Exeter, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. His chalices are tall with straight sides, and are usually ornamented with some bands of foliated design ; and, in accordance with the order of 1562, each has a cover to match, which, being fitted with a projecting and flattened top, commonly served as a paten, though of small dimensions. But more remarkable is the extraordinary size of many flagons—mostly of pewter or other base metal. One signal instance is Tiverton, which, although already possessing one " gallon pott for the Communion table," in 1694 obtained " two flaggons of two quarts each." To St Columb Minor in 1750 the Earl of Godolphin gave a massive flagon of silver

of nearly a gallon capacity. Again, Tavistock in the early half of the seventeenth century acquired four, each of which would hold some quarts of wine, besides one of smaller size; but, as though these were insufficient, John, Duke of Bedford, in 1761 presented another of silver, thirteen inches in height. We should like to be able to believe that such huge vessels were not really necessary, but from other sources we know that at that period the quantity of wine consumed was enormous. For instance, the churchwardens' accounts for that same parish of Tavistock reveal to us that in 1684 there was provided for the Whitsunday Celebration 11 quarts, for the Michaelmas one 8 quarts, for that at Christmas 12 quarts, and for that at Easter 36 quarts—there were only four Celebrations a year. The wine cost 1s. 10d. a quart, and £6 2s. 0d. was disbursed for the 67 quarts, a shilling being allowed for bread. Tavistock had then a population of probably rather over 3,000; but, even so, the provision was so lavish that we can only imagine that Vicar Jasper Canne made a generous application of the sixth post-Communion rubric. Clovelly, however, can only have been a mere village, and yet we find that the wine for the four Celebrations in 1753 cost £2 14s. 9d., in 1759 £3 2s. 6d., and in 1760 £2 13s. 6d.; so, if the price of wine was the same as before, the average amount provided for one Celebration was $7\frac{3}{4}$ quarts.* These lamentable practices are partly—only partly—explained by the fact that in the earlier period every person was required by law to take the Communion, and men had to qualify for all civil offices by receiving the Sacrament; but such desecrating treatment of the sacred rite cannot be thus accounted for at the later date.

Several Easter sepulchres have been recognised in west country churches, the identification of some at least being made certain by the preservation of carvings of our Lord's Resurrection, as at South Pool and Woodleigh. They usually take the form of an arched recess in the wall on the north of the altar, that at South Hill having a double arch. Other

* *Ch. of St Peter, Tiverton*, 42, 43; *Abbots of Tavistock*, 170, 265, 308, 324; *Tavistock Par. Records*, 48, 49; *A Book of the West—Cornwall*, 160.

examples occur at Holcombe Burnell, Lustleigh, St Mabe, Tintagel, Tremaine, and St Wendron. Of relics the diocese has but little to show. The skulls of St Probus and St Grace are preserved in St Probus Church, having been discovered under the altar in 1851, and at St Phillack there is a phial containing blood of that saint; but, though the ancient reliquaries of St Petrock and St Neot may still be seen at Bodmin and St Neot, the contents have disappeared.

The ancient fonts of the two western counties occupy a pre-eminent place among the fonts of England, many of them belonging to Norman times, and some even claiming to be of Saxon workmanship. Probably the most ancient carving is that of the Dolton font, which has the Scandinavian type of interlacing work, such as appears on the Copplestone Cross; but it is composed of two blocks of stone, fragments of some primitive monument, which at an unknown date were united to form a font; so that, though the parts belong to the eighth or tenth century, as a font it is not so old. The fonts at Luppitt and Dunkeswell and South Milton are covered with quaintly rude carvings of men and beasts, and have been assigned to the tenth or eleventh century. A number of tub-shaped fonts belong to the Conquest period. Some are possibly earlier, such as the entirely plain examples at Bridgerule and Lydford and Shaldon, and, maybe, the very simply ornamented ones at Pinhoe and St David's, Exeter. Others seem to be of rather later date—Trusham, Poltimore, Zeal Monachorum, Lympstone, and St Pancras's, Exeter, all of which are encircled by a plain or a cabled band; and Bickleigh near Plymouth, which has a zigzag pattern. More richly carved, in the recognised Norman style, are the fonts at Honeychurch, Stoke Canon, St Mary Church, Alphington, St Mary Steps in Exeter, and Farringdon. Here, indeed, is a group of excellent early examples, such as is not to be matched anywhere else.

A development of this type is the girdled tub-font, whose encircling band is not simply ornamental, but seems to compress the stone as though by a waist-belt. The Bere Ferrers font is of extraordinary and unique shape, the bowl being flanked by four far-protruding projections, which are

suggestive of partly unrolled leaves or volutes of shells. That at Cheriton Bishop is covered with carved patterns, while those at West Putford and Clyst St Lawrence are plain ; but all are characterized by the compressing waist-band, and all are of very early workmanship of Norman date.

The next development is the font whose bowl and support are dissimilar, the lower member being plain, and smaller in diameter, though not much smaller than the upper. Combe-in-Teignhead and Coffinswell have beautiful fonts of this sort, the bowls being excellently carved with Norman designs. Those at Topsham and St Kea are adorned with quaint sculptures of a dragon.*

The next class of fonts, belonging to the twelfth century, consists of what are sometimes, because of their form, named chalice-fonts (though they have nothing to correspond to the knob of the stem of a chalice), and sometimes, perhaps more exactly, pedestal fonts, for they consist of a bowl resting on a cylindrical shaft. There are divers shapes of fonts belonging to this class, some having circular bowls, some cushion-shaped, and some square. Beautiful examples of the first are to be seen at Harberton, South Pool, Wolborough, and Cornworthy. That at Dean Prior is quaintly incised, and Highampton's has curious geometrical designs ; but several of this class have little or no decoration, such as those at Little Hempston and Tetcott and Clawton.

The cushion-bowl fonts, another variety of the Norman style, are very similar in shape to the cushion capital of a pillar, and give the impression of having been made circular, and then having four flanches cut off from them perpendicularly. In some instances the edges of the four faces so formed are contiguous, and in these the top of the font is necessarily square, as at Upton Hellions and Landcross and Clovelly ; but in others there is a strip of the rounded part between the faces, as at Alverdiscott and Instow and Inwardleigh. A remarkable modification of the latter, found more often in Cornwall than in Devon, is when the top is square, and under each corner is a carving of a human head.

* *Fonts and Font Covers*, 119, 144 ; *Trans. of Devon. Assoc.*, XLV, 314 ; XLVI, 428 ; XLVII, 349.

Ashwater and Bratton Clovelly provide the only instances in the latter county ; but others across the Tamar are Callington, Jacobstow, and St Thomas's-by-Launceston.

The fonts of the thirteenth century are commonly of the tabular type of bowl, square or octagonal in shape, and mostly made of purbeck marble. They are set on a large central pedestal, with or without four surrounding shafts, or the four corner shafts might be the only supports. Such fonts frequently have as ornament merely a shallow arcading, carved on the sides of the bowl. We find examples of this class at Crediton and Braunton. The others of that century are mostly freestone, and in them there is a tendency for the shafts to become engaged, the bowls, though of various shapes, being more often circular, with very simple adornment.*

The fourteenth century font is a distinct development—the bowl is rarely either round or square, but polygonal, generally octagonal, the pedestal also being of that shape. In other parts of England the supporting shafts disappeared, but in Devon and Cornwall they were still in vogue, as they had been in Norman times, *e.g.*, St Cuby, Roche, and the exceptionally fine font at Bodmin, and they even survived into the succeeding period. On the sides of the bowl was introduced profuse decoration, which frequently took the form of carved arches ; and these soon assumed an ogee shape, the space enclosed by each being carved as a niche with figure, and the pedestal being adorned likewise. The Lostwithiel font belongs to this class, but it is of exceptional design, for not only does it rest on five supports, but the eight panels are plain, except for very bold figure carving, the east face bearing the Rood with the attendant persons.†

From the beginning of the fifteenth century up to the time of the Reformation, the octagonal shape of font was practically universal. Occasionally, a quite plain example is to be met with, as at Pilton ; but the normal font was richly carved, more so than in any other age. It is noticeable, too, that it then became customary to utilize it as a sermon in stone,

* *Fonts and Font Covers*, 206.

† *Fonts and Font Covers*, 227.

the sculptures being as a rule of a Christian character—scenes from the Bible, figures of saints, or sacred emblems—the chief exception being the introduction of coats-of-arms, probably those of the donors. Herein they show a striking difference from those of early date, with their grotesque monsters and geometrical patterns, and from the later with their elaborate architectural designs.*

Not much was done in font-making after the Reformation period until the Church building age of the nineteenth century. The most noteworthy example is the font in Exeter Cathedral, which was made for the baptism of Princess Henrietta, daughter of Charles I, in 1644. Though rather top-heavy, it is a beautiful work in white marble, save for the four rather coarse cherubs' heads that flank the bowl.†

Devon and Cornwall cannot rival East Anglia as regards font-covers, as they are almost entirely lacking in Gothic work—except for the tapering example, nine feet high, at Shaugh Prior. This remarkable piece of work, which was rescued from a hayloft by the Reverend J. B. Strother, was probably constructed in the fifteenth century. It is fitted with doors on hinges, and the top is ornamented with eight figures of tonsured priests as finials and a bishop at the summit. The Norman fonts at Lanreath and Tawstock and St Mary Steps, Exeter, have conical covers of later date (the last being a modern composition), the ancient font at Little Petherick is provided with a carved oak spiral cover, and there is a post-Reformation cover at Plymstock. Plain and low canopies are to be seen in Exeter Cathedral and Colebrooke Church, both of Jacobean date, the one having a bird at its apex, and the other an angel. Very remarkable are the late Jacobean carvings which surmount the fonts at Cockington and Swymbridge. Their front panels work on hinges, and open after the fashion of triptychs; the former being very richly ornamented, while the latter, fixed against a pillar, reaches from the floor to a considerable height, and entirely encloses the whole font. The Pilton cover, also Jacobean, and very similar to that at Tawstock, is beautifully ornate,

* *Fonts and Font Covers*, 241.

† *Fonts and Font Covers*, 269.

the eight ribs being crocketed and terminating in a carved finial.*

The west country roodscreens are a unique feature in ecclesiastical art. Not only have we the *dictum* of the first authorities on this subject that "the painted screens of Devon certainly form the chief archaeological glory of that delightful county," but it has to be acknowledged that no other district in England can claim to possess so rich and so remarkable an array of this kind as Devonshire. Every English county possesses some screens, and they are numerous in East Anglia, and in the Welsh borderland. In both of those localities the material employed is wood, for in the former stone is not obtainable, and in the latter it is not suitable for carving. A third region is Wiltshire and adjoining lands, where the natural oolite is easily worked, so that the screens there are chiefly of stone. In the south-west—Devon and Cornwall and the neighbouring part of Somerset—conditions are similar to the Welsh borderland, and consequently stone screens are few in number. The signal example in that material is the great choir-screen of the Cathedral, a spacious edifice supported on three wide archways, with the organ set on it. Another is the magnificent one at Totnes, the finest screen in the county, which was erected by the Corporation in 1460 as an imitation of the arrangement in the mother-church of the diocese. A few others are of stone, as at Awliscombe and Hemyock, and there are several parclose and chapel-screens of like workmanship; but almost all the rest are of wood.

The roodscreens of Devon and Cornwall fall naturally into two main divisions or classes. The earlier class comprises screens that are divided by perpendicular shafts into compartments, each compartment consisting of an opening of one light or two, set in a rectangular framework, and ornamented with tracery or carved work. Above was a horizontal beam supporting a flat or projecting coved soffit and a roodloft, on which—or more often on a beam higher up—were fixed the crucifix and attendant figures. Doubtless very many churches were provided with such screens in the

* *Fonts and Font Covers*, 281; *Devon Ch. Antiquities*, 112.

thirteenth and fourteenth centuries; but, though a number are still extant in Wales, no complete example is preserved in this part of the country. The oldest is the screen at Welcombe; the most typical is that at Stoke-in-Teignhead, though even that has been much altered; and there are other screens or parts of screens (not all of them roodscreens) in Exeter Cathedral, at Atherington and Burlescombe and Calverleigh, and perhaps a dozen other churches. Modern reproductions are to be seen at Ashburton and Littleham near Bideford.

The later and prevalent type, so characteristic of west country churches, is of Perpendicular style, and is quite peculiar to this district, both in plan and in detail. The lowest part from floor-sill to transom is about 3½ feet high, and contains panels with traceried heads, usually adorned with painted figures of saints. The middle and principal part consists of a range of arcaded openings, each resembling an elaborate Perpendicular window of four (occasionally three) lights. Above, and projecting from the spandrils of the arches, rises a vaulting of polygonal section with moulded ribs and panels enriched with sunk tracery and carvings in low relief; and over this was at one time a loft with carved beams below, and a front above containing panels for paintings, all surmounted by rood and figures. These last have all disappeared, in accordance with the mandate of 1548; and the orders of Archbishops Parker and Grindal have swept away all the lofts except that in Exeter Cathedral and those in the north aisles of Atherington and Marwood; but in many cases there has been preserved the series of row upon row of horizontal beams, four or even five in number, with beadings between them, each richly coloured and deeply carved with varied patterns of foliage or the like.*

Woodcarving reached its acme of excellence in the fifteenth century, and the great majority of our screens were erected between 1420 and 1540, the most prolific time being 1470-1520. During the latter part of that period less care was bestowed on the work, which consequently suffered a loss of vigour and expression; and besides, foreign influences

* *Roodscreens and Roodlofts*, 63.

were gaining ground, French and Flemish and Italian styles coming into vogue. The fifteenth century was also signalized as the age of church rebuilding in Devon and Cornwall, and this circumstance explains the almost total disappearance of the screens of the earlier type, for the larger edifices required new screens; or, maybe, the west country Perpendicular, with its lack of a chancel arch, was suggestive of scope for something more ambitious than the former flat and simpler screen.*

Besides these two chief classes, there are about a dozen screens belonging to the succeeding period, which, though in some cases resembling the earlier rectangular type, were never designed for roodlofts. Those at Colebrooke and Brushford are remarkable for their delicately reticulated tracery, the former being flamboyant in style; that at Holbeton is very elaborately carved with badges and other armorial bearings; while the screens at Ermington and Washfield are of Jacobean date, and that at Cruwys Morchard of Georgian.†

Very impressive is the effect of one of the Perpendicular screens, with its long stretch of perhaps fifteen arcaded bays, extending right across the nave and aisles, especially where the gallery-front has been reconstructed, as at Kenton and Staverton and Lew Trenchard and St Breage; or where the figures have been restored, as at Kenn, Bridgerule, Dartmouth, All Hallows' in Exeter, St Mary Tavy, and Sparkwell in Devonshire, and in Cornwall at Blisland and St Breage, Kilkhampton and Little Petherick and St Columb Major. Truly magnificent are the screens at Totnes and Harberton, at Kenton and Kentisbeare, at Cullompton and Halberton, at Hartland and Altarnun; and in comparison, how bare and empty are the great churches of St Andrew's at Plymouth and Bodmin, Tavistock and Launceston, Crediton and Tiverton, Axminster and Ottery St Mary, all of which, alas! have lost their screens.

Devonshire is so fortunate as to possess 140 roodscreens

* *Roodscreens and Roodlofts*, 277.

† *Roodscreens and Roodlofts*, 279; *Trans. of Devon. Assoc.*, XXXIV, 547.

and about 140 parclose or other screens, besides minor fragments; but, out of over 250 ancient churches in the diocese of Truro, "all of which," declare Bond and Camm, "were at one time indubitably furnished with roodscreens," only 50 retain any remnants, and most of those are but insignificant portions. So widespread has been the destruction there, that only 7 churches can boast of the major part of their old roodscreen, and none but St Ewe and St Mawgan in Pydar has been able to preserve its vaulting. The Puritans were responsible for many acts of desecration—for instance they destroyed the screen at St Ives and the organ upon it in 1647-8—but a more disastrous age was the nineteenth century, and a list with dates has been drawn up of 77 Devonshire screens known to have been destroyed or removed in that period, pure vandalism being the incentive in some cases, and in others an utterly perverted idea of church improvement.*

One of the chief interests of these screens lies in the paintings of saints on the panels, over forty of them retaining the ancient figures. True, as works of art they are decidedly inferior to those in East Anglian churches, for the drawing is not so skilful, the figures are not so richly vested, and the backgrounds generally lack ornamentation. Still, some of those in Devon are meritorious, especially those at Ashton and Plymtree; the portraits of the twelve sibyls at Bradninch are graceful and charming; and the characters at Ipplepen and Buckland-in-the-Moor were painted by real artists. Among the subjects portrayed are to be found the Holy Trinity, the Saviour, Blessed Mary, the Annunciation, the Epiphany, and other biblical persons and events; the Twelve Apostles figure fairly frequently—in six churches they appear alternately with the Prophets; and the Four Western Fathers are not uncommon. But the striking feature in the *personnel* is the predominance of unfamiliar and even obscure saints, many of whom are introduced from abroad, while local celebrities, such as St Boniface of Crediton, are in most cases ignored. Here is the catalogue of the

* *Roodscreens and Roodlofts*, 275, 377; *Trans. of Devon. Assoc.*, XXXIV, 549.

extensive Wolborough screens, which together comprise 66 panels. Besides Abraham and Isaac, the majority of the Apostles and some other New Testament characters, and the Four Western Fathers, there are such well-known saints as George and Leonard, Benedict and Bernard, Cosmas and Damian, and ladies such as Helen and Veronica, Sidwell and Etheldreda, Katharine and Dorothy, Barbara and Apollonia. The historical heroes, William of York, King Olaf, Abbot Maurus, and Paul the Hermit find a fitting place; but it is surprising to meet with Adrian and Alexis and Aubert, with Leodegar and Julian Hospitator and Victor of Marseilles, with Gertrude the Great and Bridget of Sweden and Joan of Valois, and especially with John Schorne, Rector of Long Marston in Berks, who figures also at Alphington and Portlemouth, carrying the big boot in which he held the Devil imprisoned. Torbryan has a number of the same characters, and adds to them Vincent and Sebastian and Armagil, Sitha of Lucca and Katharine of Siena and Elizabeth of Hungary. At Portlemouth we come across Peter Martyr, Cornelius, and Winwaloe; and at Alphington St Denys carrying his head, St Francis receiving the stigmata, and St Dunstan with tongs holding the Devil by his nose. Bavon of Ghent appears at Holne, and Erasmus at Hennock with his entrails wound around a windlass; and at Kenn are Roch and Hubert, Christina and Genevieve, Juliana and Mary of Egypt. Here indeed was material for instruction in Christian lore, and how interesting must it have been for churchfolk to exchange visits and compare the saints that adorned their respective churches! *

Besides serving as the poor man's Church history book, these screens must have been intended for some other practical purpose; and the provision of a permanent staircase, constructed in every church in the thickness of the wall at the end (in some cases at each end) of the screen, is sufficient indication that screens were in regular or frequent use. It is difficult to conceive that it was customary to read the Holy Gospel therefrom, for not only would the position be an inconvenient one in a short church, but for the priest to mount

* *Roodscreens and Roodlofts*, 209.

a narrow and winding stone staircase would mean ruin to his silk vestment, besides being a difficult undertaking for him in his robes, and also for his attendants, maybe carrying cross and candles and censer. It seems much more reasonable to infer that the screen-loft was used for music, providing accommodation for the singers, or for the organ or other instruments. Some proof can be adduced in support of this theory, *e.g.*, at St Petrock's, Exeter, the sum of 7s. was paid in 1472 "to Walter Abraham for making a seat in le Rodelofte when playing on the orgonys." For such a purpose there would be sufficient space, the floor being six feet wide, and protected at the sides.*

Apart from the many magnificent rood and parclose screens, and the episcopal throne and the ancient *miserere* seats with their modern canopies in the Cathedral at Exeter, there is not much woodwork that is specially remarkable in the diocese. Exception, however, must be made with regard to the carved ends of pews, the western type being a rectangular block of oak, whose squared top rises little, if at all, above the back of the seat, and whose outer surface is richly ornamented with elaborate and varied patterns and subjects. Admirable examples are those at St Mullion and Launcells and St Columb Major in Cornwall, and at Braunton and Mortehoe in Devonshire. The most usual subjects are the emblems of the Passion, as at Monkleigh and Landulph and St Endellion ; but the range is very wide, including profane things as well as sacred, and also coats-of-arms, or the initials of the donor or the carver. Thus, at Davidstow is portrayed the Nativity, and at Abbotsham and West Woolfardisworthy the Crucifixion. At Braunton we find a figure of St Brannock with his cow, and at Combe-in-Teignhead St Katharine, St Barbara, and others. Lew Trenchard has St Michael trampling on a dragon and weighing souls in scales, and Poughill in Cornwall a weird representation of the delivery of a soul from Purgatory. At Padstow is a fox preaching to geese, and at Landulph a fox running off with a goose ; at St Levan a jester with cap and bells,

* *Trans. of Devon. Assoc.*, XXXIV, 534; *Rood and other Screens*, 5.

a merman at St Gwinear, and at Zennor and Down St Mary a mermaid. Among the 63 bench-ends at East Budleigh are to be found a three-masted ship and the arms of the grandfather of Sir Walter Raleigh (himself a native of that parish) and the date 1537. The earliest of these carvings belong to the latter part of the fifteenth century, and the fashion was continued till late in the sixteenth, as in the fine example at Sandford; a typical instance being Hartland, where early in that century Hugh Prust (whose initials and work are still to be seen there) "did at his owne charges paie for the erecting of all the seats, pews and seages in St Mary's Guild or aisle."

Most of the best pulpits are of stone—of octagonal form, with a figure of a saint in each panel, surmounted by a canopy. Such mainly belong to the Perpendicular period, but earlier pulpits exist, notably a thirteenth century one of Caen stone at Egloshayle, and another in the modern St Paul's Church at Truro. A curiosity is a richly carved octagonal pulpit, hollowed out of a tree trunk, at Chivelstone; and a Jacobean example (1636) is to be found in a beautifully carved wooden pulpit at Liskeard. The pulpits at Ashton and Pilton are provided with iron stands for hour-glasses—at the latter this takes the form of a hand, and a large hour-glass has been supplied for use. Tawstock has a similar iron hand, but this is not *in situ*.

A few *miserere* seats are extant. In Devon there are some at Ottery St Mary, Bovey Tracy, Cockington, and Kingsbridge; and in Cornwall there is one at Bodmin, another at St German's, quaintly adorned with a carving of a hunter with his dogs and crossbow and game, and four at St Buryan's—for the use of the Dean and the three Prebendaries. Pilton has a remarkably fine wooden altar, and also the back of a carved and canopied mediaeval throne—probably that of the Priors—which is made to serve as an extra canopy over the already canopied font. Further, in addition to the series of magnificent stone bosses in the Cathedral, there are many carved wooden examples of interest in divers churches, the old waggon-roofs lending themselves happily to this species of decoration. Sometimes

faces of persons find place there; for instance, Edward I and his two Queens, Eleanor and Margaret, are believed to figure in North Bovey Church. Coats-of-arms are not uncommon, as the Courtenay shield at Sampford Courtenay. And in some places we find quaint conceits: here a sow with her farrow; there three rabbits, so disposed in a circle that their three ears form an equilateral triangle—a symbol of the Holy Trinity; or again, a pelican in her piety, or a Paschal Lamb.

Of all the generous stores of tapestries, provided by our pious forebears for the vesture of the ministers and the adorning of the sanctuaries, there is scarcely anything now in existence in the west. Of the few relics that are extant, the chief is a vestment belonging to St Peter's Church at Barnstaple, which in 1911 was in private hands, being the property of Mrs Peard of Braunton. It is a chasuble, made of rich white brocaded silk damask, with velvet orphreys, which were once of rose-pink colour, but are now faded to a dull copper. On the back is a broad cross, having on its centre an *appliqué* figure of the Holy Mother and Child, and around there are four angels and six floral ornaments. The front has an erect strip of velvet between conventional flowers. There is much gold thread, and the whole is beautifully worked. It has been identified as "a chīsapell of whit damske," which was the first of six such vestments mentioned in an inventory of goods belonging to Barnstaple Church in 1562. One of the churchwardens at that time was Mr John Peard, and it may be inferred that he secured this one, and that it was handed down in his family until restored by its last owner to the Church in which it used to be worn long ago. By competent judges it is deemed to have been made about the year 1500, and it is now preserved in a glass case in the north aisle of the Church, but its condition would allow of its being worn again.

Parts of a chasuble and a cope of the end of the fifteenth century were at some time fastened together, to form a covering for the altar of the Church of St Mary Arches at Exeter. The material is brocade, and the colouring is chiefly gold and green, and there are embroidered figures of eleven

saints, though much worn and faded. It is exposed to view in a glass case in the Church. Of about the same date is an altar-covering at Culmstock, apparently composed of portions of two copes. The main portion is of velvet, with an Assumption worked on it—a figure of the Blessed Virgin in the centre, attended by three angels, with *fleurs de lys* and conventional flowers; and the bottom and the sides consist of a series of fifteen worked figures of saints. St Mary's, Higher Brixham, has a similar altar-cloth of the same material—once red velvet, but now dark—and with the same subject, namely, the Assumption. Here there are thirteen saints; so this, too, must consist of parts of at least two copes. Another piece of Church work coeval with the last is a funeral pall, belonging to St Petrock's Church in Exeter. This, also, is patched together of portions of a cope of cloth of dark blue tissue with ornamentations of blue velvet. Some of the border and several figures of saints from the orphreys have been formed into a cross, which spans the pall, while others are ranged along one side, the whole being fringed with blue and gold.*

Truly remarkable is the far-reaching extent of the destruction or decay of the contents of windows, which once so richly and so generously beautified the houses of God in this land. There can be no doubt but that the devotion of our predecessors inspired them at vast cost thus to adorn at least the great majority of their churches; and certainly such large and important fanes as Crediton and Ottery St Mary, Plymouth and Totnes, Tiverton and Cullompton, Tavistock and Barnstaple would not have been neglected in this respect; but in not one of these, the eight chief churches of Devon, is there now remaining a scrap of mediaeval glass. All has gone from these and from many another considerable church, and some whole districts have been stripped quite bare, such as the deaneries of Barnstaple and Shirwell; though we know that, so late as Risdon's day, Braunton in that region possessed pictorial representations of the legend of St Brannock:—"I forbear to speak," he wrote in 1608, "of his cow, his staff, his oak, his well, and his servant Abel;

* *Trans. of Devon. Assoc.*, XLIX, 200.

all of which are lively represented in a glass window of that church." * The iconoclasts of the sixteenth century, the Puritans of the seventeenth, and—perhaps worst of all—more recent innovators, utterly devoid of artistic sense and of appreciation of what is old, these have all shared in the work of destruction, so that most of the old glass has perished.

There is good reason for believing that all the windows in Exeter Cathedral were filled with coloured glass in the fourteenth century, though now there are only four surviving. However, there is still some excellent work, most of it dating from the early part of that century. In 1303 the Chapter employed a glazier, Master Walter, who was apparently a French artist from Rouen, to fix large quantities of glass which they had procured from that city ; and a north clerestory window in the choir, opposite the Bishop's throne, containing figures of four saints under canopies, is acknowledged to be his, as well as the glass that once filled the great east window. The latter was originally a window of six lights, but near the end of the century (1389) it was enlarged so as to comprise nine lights ; and Master Walter is credited with the three top figures (Abraham, Moses, and Isaiah), the three on the left in the base (St Margaret, St Katharine, and St Mary Magdalene), and the three on the right (St Peter, St Paul, and St Andrew). The new work in the enlarged window was entrusted to Robert Lyen of Exeter, who placed below in the centre the Madonna and Holy Child, flanked by St Barbara and St Martin, and above, St Michael, St Gabriel, and another St Katharine. The other four figures to the left and right in the middle tier—St Sidwell and St Helena, St Edward and St Edmund—are of larger dimensions than the others, and seem to be of rather earlier date than Lyen's work. Here, then, is a magnificent series of figures, enriched with canopies and coats-of-arms and other adornments, almost all of them the work of the fourteenth century. Two other windows belong to the early part of that same century and contain armorial subjects, *viz.*, those in the north and south sides respectively of the

* *Survey of Devon*, ed. 1811, 337.

chapels of St Mary Magdalene and St Gabriel, which flank the Lady Chapel; while a considerable quantity of old glass is distributed in many other windows. Several others have been filled with modern work, some of which is good, and none is very bad.*

Of all the churches in Devon, there are now only eighty-nine which still retain any old examples of such work. Some have merely fragments of old glass, and save in about twenty-five cases its occurrence is to be found in but one window in each, while in no less than thirty-one the interest is almost entirely secular, the subjects being confined to heraldry. But, though no church in the county presents a full set of old coloured windows, Doddiscombsleigh has a well preserved series that fills the five three-light windows of its north aisle, remarkable alike for the interest of the subjects and for the excellence of the workmanship, which place this church at the head of those in Devon for this class of decoration. Of very special note is the east window, which contains a figure of the Saviour (a modern reproduction), surrounded by representations of the Seven Sacraments—and marvellous indeed it is that these should have been spared throughout the times of religious strife and bigotry. In the other windows one light is occupied by the three crowned Persons of the Blessed Trinity, and each of the others by the figure of a saint, *e.g.*, the Holy Mother, St Patrick, St Christopher, and St Edward the Confessor.

The adjoining parish of Ashton is fortunate in having much armorial glass, connected with the history of the Chudleigh family of the fifteenth century, including the coats of the contemporary bishops, Lacy and Courtenay. The oldest in the county is that of the east window at Bere Ferrers (thirteenth century), where is portrayed a figure of the Lord in benediction, and on either side Sir William Ferrers and Lady Isota (Carminow) his wife, the founders of that church. In the same Tavistock deanery is the parish of Kelly, whose four-light east window of the latter part of the fourteenth century shows figures of the Crucified, His Mother, St John the Evangelist, and St Edward the Confessor

* *Trans. of Devon. Assoc.*, XLIV, 231.

holding a model of Westminster Abbey. There are several Kelly coats-of-arms, and the glass is said to have been preserved by being stored in Kelly House, close by, until recent times. A similar account is given of that in Torbryan Church, which, besides the Bryan shield, depicts the symbol of the Blessed Trinity, the Sacred Heart, the emblems of the Passion, and figures of the four Latin Fathers. This is believed to have been hidden away during the perilous years of the middle of the seventeenth century by the then rector, the Reverend Edward Gosewell. One other design should be mentioned, *viz.*, a small window in the vestry of Sidmouth Church, bearing representations of the five Sacred Wounds, which take the curious form of five narrow red pendant streamers, each surmounted by a crown, and each labelled with its designation.

Other remarkable examples are a figure which is thought to represent King Edward V in the east window of the north aisle of Coleridge Church ; at Lustleigh a window containing a crowned Madonna, a mitred bishop, and St Margaret and St Katharine ; at Broadwoodkelly some old glass, which includes a figure of St Sidwell ; and over the altar of Abbot's Bickington Church representations of the Father and the Son, the Blessed Virgin and Child, a crucifix and a vested priest, and St Anthony. There are several examples of Flemish glass, chiefly scenes from our Lord's life. Those at Upton Pyne and Hatherleigh are dated respectively 1603 and 1653 ; and there are others at Ashcombe, Gittisham, Haccombe, and Offwell ; while Calverleigh has a sixteenth century representation of the scene at Calvary, sent over in recent times from France by a Breton incumbent.* Of modern glass Devonshire has now a fair quantity, in most cases unfortunately inserted without any attempt to secure connection of subjects or harmony of treatment. St Mary Tavy is an exception, being the happy possessor of a series of beautiful figures of saints by Kemp, the gift of the Rector, the Reverend I. K. Anderson.

In Cornwall St Neot stands unrivalled for its magnificent series of fifteen windows, all filled with glass of the fifteenth

* *MS. Notes*, Miss B. F. Cresswell.

or early sixteenth century (though extensively supplemented in modern times), the principal topic being the life and miracles of the Patron Saint. At St Winnow, too, is some glass of early fifteenth century date, representing various saints, such as Winnow and George, Leonard and Christopher; and in the east window is a Crucifixion scene of a century later; while St Kew possesses the scene of the Passion, brought from Bodmin in 1469.

Of the wealth of frescoes, once lavished upon the walls of our churches, but little is now to be seen; though it often happens that, when coats of whitewash or plaster are stripped off, ancient paintings are revealed. In the retro-choir of Exeter Cathedral, partly destroyed by an unsightly monument, are the remains of what must have been a beautiful picture. The upper part is still discernible, and portrays the Blessed Virgin in glory, supported by Angels, and surrounded by Thrones, Dominations, Principalities, and Powers; and below are indications of an interview between a king and a bishop. Littleham near Bideford has a notable painting of St Swithun, its patron saint, which is thought to be the work of a twelfth century artist. In Cornwall the finest series is to be found at St Breage, where, besides the wounded Christ, are portrayed such saints as Corentin, Germoe, Hilary, Christopher, Thomas Becket, and others. Poughill has two large and striking pictures of the gigantic St Christopher crossing his ford, and this favourite character appears again at St Keverne. St George figures at Calstock and at St Just-in-Penwith, and the Seven Deadly Sins are represented on the walls of Poundstock. Later generations evinced no veneration for such characters or subjects, and instead they displayed loyalty to their earthly sovereign by erecting painted or elaborately carved achievements of the Royal Arms, many of which still remain, especially in Cornwall; where also one may not seldom see on the church walls, painted on panels, a large framed copy of the letter of thanks for their support, addressed to the Cornish people by Charles I in 1643. The religious sentiment of modern times has revived the love for sacred art, and has prompted the devout to endeavour to imitate their predecessors of long ago by adorning

their churches with the beauty of holiness. Many edifices, both old and new, have been thus enriched in recent years. Most notable are a pair of pictures by Sir Edward Burne-Jones in St John's Church at Torquay, one portraying the Nativity, and the other the rich and the poor, represented by one of the Magi and one of the Shepherds, being led by Angels out of the darkness of a forest (symbolizing ignorance and error) into the light of the presence of the infant Saviour. Specially remarkable, too, are the paintings of the Stations of the Cross in St Mary Magdalene's at Barnstaple, and mosaic work at Crediton, Mortehoe, and St Peter's, Plymouth.

The tale of ancient registers is a fairly full one, for the two western counties have a comparatively large number of these records. We come across references to the general order of 1538 for the purchase of books for the purpose, such as at Ashburton, where 3s. 4d. was paid in that year by the churchwardens "for a new book bought for entering those who die in the parish, and who receive the sacrament of Baptism, according to the mandate of the most illustrious Prince Henry VIII, king, defender of the faith, and in the land supreme head of the English Church." * That parish, indeed, has lost its original register, the present one dating only from 1603; but of the eight or nine hundred still extant in England, belonging to the earliest date (1538 or 1539), Devon can boast of possessing 44 and Cornwall 16. There are, moreover, two exceptional registers that are older than these:—St Thomas's-by-Launceston has an incomplete one commencing in 1480, and Parkham in Devonshire one of 1537.

Chief among the crosses of the west country must be reckoned the Copplestone Cross, set at the junction of the boundaries of Crediton, Colebrooke, and Down St Mary—if indeed it can rightly be counted as a cross, being but a squared monolithic shaft of granite 10½ feet high and a little more than 1½ feet wide. The four faces are covered with varied carvings, principally the interlacing ornamental work of the Anglo-Saxon period, though one side contains two figures under a canopy and also a man on horseback. This "Copelstan" certainly dates back further than 974 A.D., for it is

* *Parish of Ashburton*, 25.

mentioned in a charter of King Edgar of that date. Work of the same character is to be seen at Dolton, where the lower part of the font, as already mentioned, is the base of a massive cross, the upper part being formed of another fragment—probably of a different original—which is turned upside down and has its surface hollowed out as a basin.

The Devonshire crosses are chiefly to be found on or around Dartmoor, many of them having served to mark the routes leading to Religious Houses, the principal one being the Abbots' Way from Tavistock and Buckland Abbeys to Buckfast. About 95 have been enumerated in this district; but several of these are no longer in existence, or are represented only by empty sockets. As a rule they are roughly hewn out of granite and are quite plain, such ornament as there is being simple and small in amount. Their usual height is about six feet, and they are of the Latin type. An excellent example is the sixteenth century cross at Sampford Spiney, which is more slender than most others, and has its edge deeply chamfered, so that its shape is really octagonal. A similar one is the Windypost on the ridge of Pu Tor.

Besides these there are many ancient crosses or bases of crosses in divers parishes, some erected in the middle of villages—which is the position at Lustleigh, and was so at Hennock until the cross was removed half a century ago; and some by the roadside, such as Little John's Cross near St. Thomas's, Exeter, and two in different parts of the parish of Chittlehampton. But the great majority are to be found in churchyards, where they are believed to have served as preaching places, most of them being raised on steps. A tall and ornate one with a carving of the Crucifixion is on the north side of Clyst St Lawrence Church, and other fine crosses exist in whole or in part at Hartland, Paignton, Pinhoe, Silverton, and Torbryan. A number of old fragmentary examples have been restored in modern times, such as those at Bradninch, Down St Mary, Harberton, Ipplepen, Plymtree, and Harpford (in memory of the Reverend A. M. Toplady, the hymnologist). Kenton village has an ancient round-headed cross, but that is an importation from Cornwall. Some modern crosses have been erected, among them a wayside

one at Bicton of A.D. 1743, and one at Alfington—a memorial of Bishop Patteson, who began his clerical career there.

The stone crosses of Cornwall are more numerous and more varied in design than those of any other district in the British Isles, though the quality of their workmanship is excelled by those found elsewhere. Historically and geographically the Church in Cornwall was nearly allied with the Church in South Wales, so it is but natural that the style of sculpture on the Cornish crosses should have close affinity with Welsh carvings, in which the specifically Celtic patterns were not so finely developed as those in Ireland and the north of Britain. Granite was the material most generally employed; though elvan and pentewan stone were used in some cases, being more durable, as not liable to disintegrate, like granite. The characteristic Cornish cross consists of an upright shaft, generally about five or six feet high, whose horizontal section is oblong, and which tapers slightly until it opens out into a circular head. Commonly a cross is carved in relief on each face—frequently confined to the head—or a crucifix on one face and a cross on the other. Other ornamental work is often added, such as interlacings or other patterns, or five bosses on the carved cross, but it is unusual to find any principal figures except those two. In course of time this type developed into a Gothic shape—resembling the Latin crosses of Devonshire—but these are not so numerous as the older originals.

The number of these crosses must have been very great in olden time; and, though many have been destroyed, some by accident and a larger proportion intentionally, there are still in existence about 360 roundheaded crosses—some of them only fragmentary—besides about 50 sockets or bases whose shafts have disappeared; and of the Gothic type there are about 30. Both classes are distributed over the whole county, except that the north-eastern region has scarcely any; but they occur rather more frequently as one moves from east to west, being most abundant in the Penwith district. It is not possible to assign definite dates, but, while a few stones that have the chi-rho monogram are believed to belong to the seventh century, the roundheaded

crosses probably range from the eighth or ninth century down to the twelfth, the Gothic examples being erected soon after. Many of them are set up near churches, but more are by the wayside or in the open country, being intended, not as sepulchral monuments or as memorials of deceased persons, but as preaching and praying stations for encouraging the devotions of the people, and to serve as gathering-places for the holding of public services. Such rallying-points must have been most useful before the twelfth century, when as yet the erecting of parish churches had not become usual; and we may well recall in this connection the touching explanation of Wynken de Worde (in his *Dives et Pauper* A.D. 1496) :—" For this reason ben crosses by y^e^ way, that when folk passynge see y^e^ croysses, they shoulde thynke on Hym that deyed on y^e^ croysse, and worshippe Hym above althyng."

In the early middle ages the custom of showing veneration for holy wells seems to have been common in western Europe. In England we call to mind such famous examples as St Augustine's Well at Ebbsfleet in Thanet, St Winifred's Well at Holy Well in Flintshire, St Chad's Well at Lichfield, St Edmund's Springs at Hunstanton, and the Well of St Thomas (Becket) at Canterbury Cathedral. Strangely enough, this form of devotion was, in quite early days, thought to breed gross superstition, and many were the condemnations that were issued by Church authorities. In France several Councils forbade the venerating of sacred springs, and well-worship came under the ban of English canons in the reigns of Edgar, Cnut, and Henry I, being even classed with such criminal practices as augury and necromancy. However, their origin would appear to have been innocent enough, for missionaries and hermits naturally fixed their abodes near some spring of pure water, and used this for the baptism of converts. Association with the holy agent and the holy rite would lead men to attribute sanctity to the spring, and in course of time pilgrims would resort to it to offer their prayers, and a shrine would be erected over the sacred spot.

The typical holy well in the west country comprises a small rectangular chamber, usually built of granite, with a

gabled roof of the same material, sometimes adorned with corner pinnacles. An arched doorway is placed in the centre of one end, and facing it is a little niche or bracket to hold a statue of the Patron Saint, the well itself being below the niche or occupying the middle of the floor space.

Devonshire has kept but few of its holy wells, but there is one at Endsleigh in Milton Abbot, commonly known as the Wishing Well, with building, niche, and image, all complete, and a copious spring of water. St Sidwell's Well at Exeter, St Hieretha's Well at Chittlehampton, St Nectan's Well close to Hartland Church, St Patrick's (maybe St Petrock's) Well at Dunkeswell, St Rumon's Well at Romansleigh, St John's Well on Hatherleigh Moor, St Martin's Well at Maristow (originally Martinstow), and the Holy Well at Welcombe are mostly now commonplace objects, bereft of their ecclesiastical surroundings. The more remote and secluded Cornwall, however, has been to a greater degree preserved from secularizing influences, and in 1894 the Quiller-Couches, in their book on *Ancient and Holy Wells of Cornwall*, gave descriptions of as many as ninety, though even then some had recently disappeared or were disappearing.

The parish of St Austell contains two of the finest examples in the county, *viz.*, Chapel Well at Towan and Menacuddle Well. The former, one of the largest, is handsome and massively constructed, with a carved bracket in perfect condition. The latter, which measures 11 feet by 9, and is 11 feet in height, is a pleasing edifice, with a doorway in each side, and a window in the west front. Another perfect building, composed of big granite blocks, is St Cyr's Well in the middle of Luxulyan churchtown. Other favourable specimens are the Holy Well at Golant, the Holy Well near Helston, St Ruan's Well in the village of Ruan Lanihorne, Manaton Well at South Hill—a curious and beautiful little building with a turf roof, and St Melor's Well at Linkinhorne, which has not only a niche at the back, but one inside on the left and another outside over the round doorway. Morwenstow has two—St John's Well near the vicarage, and St Morwenna's Well half-way down Morwenstow cliff, a square building with a cross on the roof. St Breward's Well was an excellent structure,

but has in recent times become dilapidated, and St Clether's Well, too, has suffered from neglect. Madron Well has now no building over it, but it is close to the ancient chapel, whose corner baptistery was supplied with water from that source. Several others have lately been admirably restored or reconstructed, such as St Julian's Well at Maker by the Earl of Mount Edgcumbe, the Holy Well at Davidstow by Mr Michael Williams, St Neot's Well by the Reverend Henry Grylls, the Vicar, and St Cleer Well by the family of Rogers of Penrose, who have made a beautiful edifice with open arches on three sides and five pinnacles on the steeply pitched roof. One of the best known is of quite a different kind—St Cubert's Well near Crantock. This is a double basin in the rocky side of a cavern by the sea, and was formerly much resorted to for the dipping of babes who were sickly or deformed. The famed Well of St Keyne is a quite plain building, and has nothing to commend it save Southey's ballad, which celebrates its reputed powers of endowing with supremacy whichever member of a wedded pair first drinks of it after marriage.

CHAPTER XXIV.

A GENERAL REVIEW.

THE early missionary saints of the west country, whose self-sacrificing labours were effectual in winning for Christ the land of Damnonia, have left succeeding generations a noble example and heritage. Not only have their names been indelibly impressed upon the topographical map of Cornwall and Devon, not only are their lives and their legends perpetuated in literature and tradition, but their splendid achievements cannot fail to serve as a lasting inspiration, inciting churchmen in every age to fresh acts of missionary enterprise. The prophetic mantle of German and Piran, of Brannock and Petrock, was taken up by Boniface of Crediton and a goodly company of his kinsmen and kinswomen, such as Willibald and Wunnibald and Walpurga, who joined with him in evangelizing the western Teutons, some of them, maybe, recruiting "the noble army of martyrs" together with him. In more recent times Henry Martyn, of whom, as a native of Truro, Cornwall is justly proud, showing her pride by dedicating in his honour the baptistery of her Cathedral, left friends and home to go out to the far East to preach christianity to Hindoos and Moslems; and he, who had won the highest honours at Cambridge as Senior Wrangler and Smith's Prizeman, was content to sacrifice all for the great cause, and to die in Persia in loneliness and obscurity. It was the same spirit that filled with missionary zeal two members of the Devonshire house of Coleridge, so that William Hart became Bishop of Barbados and the Leeward Islands, and his cousin Edward, prompted by the entreaties of William Grant Broughton, Bishop of Australia, undertook the ambitious and arduous task of founding a missionary college, which was ultimately named after St Augustine of Canterbury. A kinsman of these two, himself

also a son of Devon, John Coleridge Patteson, was fired by the same noble enthusiasm, and quitted his curacy at Alfington to accompany Bishop Selwyn to the Antipodes, afterwards succeeding him in part of his diocese as Bishop of Melanesia, and sharing with St Boniface an honourable commemoration in the Martyrs' Pulpit within the Cathedral of his ordination. Another martyred bishop, James Hannington of Eastern Equatorial Africa, was also in a measure a west-countryman, for he too was ordained in Exeter Cathedral, his first curacy being Martinhoe and Trentishoe on the grandest coast of North Devon. Nor must it be forgotten that the earliest of the Missionary Studentships, which through the length and breadth of England have gained so many workers for the Church abroad, was that founded in 1854 in Devonshire by Dr Henry Bailey and the Reverend Richard James Hayne, Vicar of Buckland Monachorum, their first *alumnus* being William Chalmers, afterwards Bishop of Goulburn. All honour to the holy men of old who led the way! All honour to those who after them trod the missionary path! And glory to Him who called them to be apostles, prophets, martyrs!

The very mention of the name of King Arthur sheds a glamour of romance on any place or any literature with which it is connected, and such connection cannot be avoided when we speak of Tintagel, of Damnonia, of early British history. How far we are justified in recognising him as a historical personage, is matter of doubt and discussion; but it is difficult to believe that the whole story is "the baseless fabric of a vision," so that it seems that there must have been some real foundation for the beautiful poetic structure built up by Malory and Tennyson; and though we may not accept as worthy of credence the narratives of Geoffrey of Monmouth and William of Malmesbury, there is the authority of Nennius for regarding him as a mighty and successful leader of the British, when early in the sixth century they were striving to resist the westward progress of the Saxon arms in the south of Britain. By that time Christianity was firmly rooted on British soil, and we are justified in inferring that Arthur was a Christian, exercising a wider and more potent influence

than King Constantine or King Brychan, though for such pious belief we may have no direct evidence.

But there is no room for doubt concerning King Athelstan and his connection with the diocese, for indeed he was very greatly concerned with both civil and ecclesiastical affairs in the west—much more so than is generally acknowledged. He was often at Exeter, and played an important part in moulding its early history, holding a Witan there in 928, granting privileges to the city, establishing a mint, and fortifying the place by building a castle and stone walls with towers. He found a quarter of the city given up to the Britons, but for some unknown reason he ejected them, and is said to have driven them away across the Tamar. His patron saint was the Apostle Peter, and in his name, linked with Blessed Mary, he founded the Exeter monastery, endowing it with twenty-six manors and enriching it with a great store of relics. He also gave the Church a diocesan constitution, appointing Conan as Bishop of Cornwall with his see at St German's and the Tamar as the dividing line, though to Eadulf of Crediton he reserved the episcopal oversight of certain Cornish estates, as well as granting him land at Sandford. Thus the Cornish Church was brought into closer union with the Church of England, and Bishop Conan's name appears in several of Athelstan's charters. Furthermore, we light upon mention of Athelstan again and again in various parts of the diocese as the originator of Church works. He is credited with the foundation of the Prebendal Church of Axminster, the Benedictine Priory of Pilton, the more important Priory of Bodmin, and the Collegiate Church of St Buryan ; and he is also said to have appropriated Barnstaple Church to Malmesbury Abbey, and to have granted a charter to that North Devon town, though the latter claim is of uncertain tradition. In him, then, we have, as an early patron of the Church in the west, one who was great as a monarch and an administrator, and also generous as an ecclesiastical benefactor.

The old diocese of Exeter may rightly be described as a religious land. In it were kept alive the holy influences of early days, and all the more so on account of its semi-

peninsular condition, and because it was so far away from London, and from Kent and East Anglia, the populous and industrial parts of mediaeval England. Cornwall especially was thus secluded, not only geographically, but also linguistically ; for throughout the middle ages many of the people could speak nothing but Cornish.* Indeed, both in speech and also as regards devotion to the Faith and the practice of religion, the Cornwall of that period must have closely resembled the present day Brittany. It is interesting to note that the history of these two counties in pre-Reformation times was chiefly ecclesiastical. They took but small part in outside movements, and were little affected by outside events. Their men were not specially famous in battles on land or in naval engagements. True, they already figured as miners, but they did not do much in other industries, or in the arts and sciences, in literature or in travel. But their architectural skill was exercised chiefly in building churches, and it was on roodscreens and frescoes and bells and other ecclesiastical works that their artists and artificers found scope for their abilities. In other ways, too, the same bent or characteristic was manifested. As already pointed out, the number of Religious Houses in this diocese was large, when compared with those in others, and was exceptionally great for the western half of England. And further, their religion must have been very dear to their hearts, and their devotion to their holy rites and practices intensely strong, when they took sword in hand and raised the standard of revolt, in order to fight against the powers that threatened to deprive them of the exercise of the ceremonies to which they were accustomed. Such traits were more pronounced in the Cornishmen than among the Devonians in the sixteenth century, and this was true also of the great Wesleyan revival of later times ; but both events made it quite evident that there was religious fervour, deep and widespread, in both counties.

But the Church in these parts has had to contend with a number of difficulties and drawbacks. The very isolation of the diocese has constituted an obstacle in the way of

* Not till 1678 was the last sermon preached in that language, and Dolly Pentreath of Paul, who talked in Cornish, died only in 1778.

progress, and efficiency cannot but be handicapped when a large number of the clergy are set in outlying parishes, where they are cut off from visiting and being visited because of the roughness of the country and the badness of roads. The supply of clergy was not satisfactory as regards either quality or quantity, at least in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Of many the learning was insufficient, so that the remedy of sending them away for a period of study had to be frequently adopted, with consequent temporary loss to the parish; and, as priests were often not to be had, there were numerous instances of incumbencies being filled by deacons or even by men in Minor Orders. Again, it was no uncommon occurrence at that period for the bishop to be absent from his diocese for some years, engaged on secular duties as a high official of the State; and, even when he was at home, the area under his jurisdiction was far too extensive for him to administer properly, especially as, being a great landowner and farmer, much of his time and attention had to be bestowed on the management of his many manors, situated in divers parts of the two counties. And worse than all these hindrances was the full and far-reaching disaster of a later age, when Christianity suffered the loss of all the works and holy influence of the Religious Houses and the Collegiate Churches and the many various chapels in town and country, a loss that has never been made good by the Church, so that it has been left to Nonconformist bodies to endeavour partially to supply the need by the erection of their numerous conventicles.

But, as a set-off against these deterrents, we have the happy fact that the Exeter diocese was presided over by a succession of remarkably fine prelates. Other dioceses may have been more remarkable for bishops of fame and eminence, but we doubt whether any was more fortunate in its series of diocesans. England as a whole may justifiably be proud of its episcopate, which has in the past compared very favourably with the episcopate on the Continent. For example, how estimable were the lives and characters of those who ruled at Canterbury when contrasted with some of those at Rome in the later middle ages; and what a wide difference there was between

the bishops on this side of the Channel and those on the other during the century before the French Revolution! In this country there have been few of whose morals we have reason to be ashamed: none who has been stigmatized as an unbeliever. And Exeter takes an honourable position among English dioceses in this respect. One indeed—only one—was a man of evil repute, and a few were opportunists or time-servers; but, though none save Joseph Hall attained to first rank and fame for eminence in his office, there were many who as excellent diocesans were a strength to the Church and an honour to their profession, such as Leofric and Arundell, Oldham and Blackall, Bickersteth and Temple. Even in the unecclesiastical eighteenth century the Exeter prelates were at least Christian gentlemen and scholars, and it would be difficult to find a more admirable group of mediaeval bishops than the splendid septet of Exeter—Bronescombe and Quivel, Stapeldon and Grandisson, Brantyngham and Stafford and Lacy—names to be for ever venerated throughout the English Church and held in highest honour in their own diocese.

The good influence of such men was of course efficacious in divers respects, and one especially must be brought into notice. It normally happens that when the first enthusiasm of any new religious movement has exhausted itself, its energy tends to lapse into effeteness and even corruption. Such was the case in this country with the various species of monasticism, and the friars suffered from degeneration as much as the monks. The revelation of the low public estimate of the Religious Orders, that we see written so plainly in the *Canterbury Tales*, is only too fully substantiated by trustworthy historians; but, as we study the Church history of the Exeter diocese, we are profoundly impressed with the conviction that here the satire of Chaucer and the writers of his day is wide of the mark. The bishops had indeed considerable trouble with the inmates of some of their Religious Houses, who neglected their Rule, indulged in worldly and sometimes sinful pleasures, and even on occasion set all authority at open defiance. But the evil was neither so marked nor so general as it was elsewhere, and the credit

of this happy condition must be attributed to the excellence of the bishops of Exeter and the ability of their government. Furthermore, although we cannot assert that all was well with the Religious Houses of the diocese in the sixteenth century, we are bound in justice to maintain that the evils were financial and social rather than moral; and if there was any possible excuse for putting an end to their existence, it must be based on the argument that they had done their special work and outlived their time, rather than that the foul crimes so freely detailed in *The Black Book* were at all representative of the real facts. We have already commented on the beneficial effects on the nation, wrought by the exercise of ecclesiastical discipline in an age when the curbing of moral and social disorders was left very largely to the Church; and to that we must add our conviction that the influence of the Exeter episcopate in the middle ages was most helpful and salutary to the clerical Orders, and that in later centuries the goodness and refinement of the bishops were largely responsible for the comparatively high standard and tone that characterized the rank and file of their clergy.

As we look back upon the distant past, there is much that we think of with envy and yearning. Happy land! to have in every parish an artistic building replete with the beauty of holiness—all so bright with colour, and all so eloquent of religious teaching! The normal church was endowed with a wealth of holy vessels and vestments, of tapestries and carvings; its windows were filled with storied glass, its walls adorned with frescoes, its screen figured with paintings on panels above and panels below, and surmounted by the holy rood; a sense of awe and mystery would be inspired by the presence of the consecrated water in the locked font, by the Reserved Sacrament suspended in the pyx before the high altar, and by lights set before side altars and images; and devotions would be quickened by the provision of a stoup by the entrance, and of cross and holy well without. We may well envy the general attendance of the parishioners at the principal service every Sunday morning, the presence of a number of worshippers at daily Mass and Evensong, the strict observance of feasts and fasts,

the regular conformity to the requirements of sacred and customary rites. How potent for good must have been the power of the priesthood to build up, to direct, to curb, when exercised in sacrament, in spiritual guidance, in restraining counsel! And even much more do we long for a revival of the people's devoted love and esteem for their religion and their Church; that for their souls' good they may, as of yore, make full use of holy ordinances and of sacred places and things.

Still, the present is a time of greater religious activity than ever before. It is an age of Church extension, of building and restoring, of furnishing and beautifying consecrated shrines; and as to freedom of conference, and the perfecting of organization, and the passing of new legislation, there has been nothing comparable with it in the past. Maybe, the clergy as a class are not so learned and scholarly as were their predecessors of last century, but certainly they are more efficient and more hard-working; and, as a consequence of modern movements and the increase of privileges and powers, the laity are displaying more interest in their Church and are taking a greater share in her work.

The result of all this has been very happy, and an interesting parallel may be drawn between an external feature and an internal reality. The churches in the west are, very many of them, much *en evidence*, being set on high ground, and with their tall towers and great crocketed pinnacles forming prominent objects, that at once arrest and hold the attention even at a distance. In some parts of England, on the contrary, one scarcely notices the churches, as they are insignificant in themselves and are not so openly exposed to view. Which things are an allegory. The Church in the west, if not very strong numerically, is firmly established, is thoroughly organized, is working well, and is generally respected; and therefore she exercises great influence, not only with her own members, but among those who are without her communion.

But, if the Church's manifold energies and activities are to have full scope, further reform and extension are needed. First is wanted an increase of the episcopate.

If for an almost heathen England with a small population St Gregory would have twenty-six diocesan bishops, the present tale of thirty-eight for the England of to-day is but a mean provision. With all our modern advance we are much behind France with its 90 dioceses, Spain with 59, and Italy with 266. On the Continent it seems usual that every large town should be an episcopal see ; and if in this region each archdeaconry became a diocese—so that there would be bishops of Exeter, Totnes, Barnstaple, Plymouth, Bodmin, and Truro—the Church would gain in efficiency and strength, and there would be a possibility of a bishop being not only the overseer of the clergy (a function unknown to the *Book of Common Prayer*), but, also, as at his Consecration he is charged to be, " a shepherd of the flock of Christ," " holding up the weak, healing the sick, binding up the broken, bringing again the out-casts, seeking the lost." Even such an extension of the episcopate would be far from reaching the standard of Palestine and North Africa in early days ; for there every considerable village had its bishop, so that in the former little country there were as many as 103 bishops in the fifth century, and in the latter over 900. Maybe the time will come when our four western counties will form a separate province with an archbishop at Exeter.

The far-sighted Bishop Phillpotts founded a Theological College at Exeter, and at Truro his lead was followed by Bishop Benson ; and though both schemes, after some years' struggling existence, died of inanition, the want is still a pressing one ; for, though about half of the candidates for Holy Orders have had the advantage of a university course, yet the clergy of the Church of England labour under the disadvantage of having had little or no special training for the exercise of their ministry. The ministers of other denominations are taught their craft—we use the word in its highest sense ; and if in a School of the Prophets either at Exeter or elsewhere every ordinand were to have a year's residence, not preparing for his Ordination examination, but being taught how to exercise the various functions of his priestly office, the Church would gain much by the increase of efficiency.

But much more far-reaching, of vastly more importance than such measures of progress or reform, is the need for home re-union. The ancient glory of the houses of God may be restored, the Sacrament may again be generally established in its right place as the chief act of Christian worship, the clergy may be more efficient than ever before, and the services be rendered with more beauty and greater decorum than was known in past ages; but only when sectarian rivalries and dissentions and schisms have been ended, when one faith and one common ecclesiastical polity are generally accepted, and when all Christians can kneel together in one communion and fellowship, can there again be realized in all its fulness the power of the Church life of the age of Leofric and Grandisson and Lacy, and the transcendent benediction of the Lord be enjoyed through the fulfilment of His prayer "that they all may be one."

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INDEX.

The names of Bishops of Exeter are printed in CAPITALS.

Abbot's Bickington, 578.
Abbotsham, 12, 56, 57.
Abbot's Kerswell, 56, 57, 248.
Achebran, 6, 37.
Adelicia, 81, 82.
Adwen, 11.
Aednoth, 21.
Aelfric, 21.
Aelfweald, 21, 27.
Aethelgar, 21.
Aethelgeard, 23, 34.
Aethelred, 23.
Aldhelm, 13, 19, 49, 59.
Aldred, Abp., 31.
Alfington, 535, 582, 587.
Alfred, King, 18, 37.
Alien Priories, 60-62, 67, 103, 353.
ALLEY, 375, 381-386.
Alphington, 66, 93, 248, 282, 300, 563, 571.
Altarnun, 12, 113, 207, 251, 429, 569.
Alverdiscott, 250, 462.
Alwington, 249.
Amicia, 88.
Antony, 127, 250.
Appledore, 494.
Archdeaconries, 158, 311.
Archpriests, 77, 224.
Arlington, 249.
Armagh, Abps., 111, 194.
Arthur, King, 10, 12, 14, 587.
ARUNDELL, 322.
Arundell Family, 287, 319, 322, 338, 356.
Ashburton, 26, 55, 58, 109, 147, 169, 175, 183, 207, 248, 263, 280, 374, 385, 437, 440, 478, 525, 580.
Ashbury, 248, 317.
Ashcombe, 11, 178, 248, 558, 578.
Ashford, 179.
Ashprington, 73, 179, 249, 451.
Ashreigney, 27, 249.
Ashton, 38, 39, 248, 570, 573, 577.
Ashwater, 187, 222, 263, 275, 464, 565.
Asser, 18, 28.
Athelstan, 15, 21, 23, 25, 26, 29, 37, 43, 55, 162, 552, 588.
Atherington, 218, 281, 288, 466, 568.
Atherton, Canon, 542.
Augustinians, 63, 65, 68, 75, 90, 97, 102, 105.
Aula, W., 102.
Austell, 12.
Aveton Giffard, 26, 173, 249, 263.
Awliscombe, 248, 566.
Axminster, 32, 55, 58, 82, 86, 87, 160, 175, 187, 248, 284, 478, 588.
Axmouth, 212, 248, 554.
Aylesbeare, 135, 239, 247, 298, 440.
Azenor, 2, 6.

Babbacombe, 494, 553.
BABINGTON, 380, 383, 384, 386, 388.
Baldhu, 494.
Baldwin, Abp., 84, 97, 108.
Bampton, 9, 54, 56, 58, 89, 248, 300, 302, 385, 481.
Banham, Abbot, 72.
Barnes, Canon, 543.
Barnstaple, 53, 54, 56, 57, 121, 171, 180, 187, 212, 218, 249, 287, 288, 298, 313, 310, 327, 399, 414, 440, 443, 444, 466, 494, 574, 580, 588.
Barnstaple Priory, 62, 78, 105, 161, 170, 249, 287, 301, 353, 354.
Barry, Bp., 545.
BARTHOLOMEW, 51, 96, 97, 106, 538.
Beaford, 250, 464.
Beauchamp, R., 91.
Beaworthy, 248.
Beer, 56, 58.
Bells, 320, 366, 557.
Belstone, 248, 462.
Benedictines, 52, 60, 62, 64, 65, 68, 80, 89.
Benet, T., 335.
Bere Ferrers, 38, 65, 224, 249, 495, 563, 577.
BERKELEY, 191, 213.
Berrynarbor, 150, 249.
Berry Pomeroy, 54, 341.
BETHELL, 473.
BICKERSTETH, 537.
Bickleigh (East), 87, 187, 385, 440.
Bickleigh (West), 89, 563.
Bicton, 247, 282.
Bideford, 187, 211, 258, 298, 327, 420, 440, 452, 464, 465, 544.
Bigbury, 263, 463.
Bishop's Nympton, 55, 58, 113, 124, 140, 159, 221, 250, 327, 407.
Bishop's Tawton, 55, 56, 113, 124, 159, 175, 187, 217, 218, 249, 288, 302, 327, 361, 466.
Bishop's Teignton, 55, 57, 88, 124, 131, 140, 220, 248, 302, 361.
BLACKALL, 439, 442, 443, 524, 528.
Blackawton, 100, 178.
BLACKBURNE, 449, 459.
Black Death, 71, 79, 99, 121, 206, 235, 261, 262.
Black Torrington, 464.
Blake, M., 414.
Blisland, 341, 403, 569.
BLONDY, 113, 124, 125.
Boconnoc, 207, 251, 532.
Bodmescombe, 65, 102.
Bodmin, 10, 15, 17, 60, 65, 116, 131, 139, 171, 241, 250, 258, 280, 288, 302, 338, 363, 459, 483, 552, 559, 563, 588.
Bodmin Priory, 33, 75, 98, 105, 126, 134, 161, 170, 209, 250, 300, 351.
Body, W., 336.
Bolventor, 494.
Bondleigh, 249, 281.
Boniface, 19, 25, 48, 586.
Boniface of Savoy, Abp., 124, 126.
Bonus, Abbot, 70, 209, 216.
Boscastle, 76.
Bosham, 28, 124, 172, 200, 211, 230.
BOTHE, 318, 328.
Botus Fleming, 127, 250.
Bovey Tracy, 187, 248, 518, 573.
Bow, 247.
Boyd, Dean, 526, 529.
Boyton, 12, 98, 461.
BRADBRIDGE, 377, 381-386.
Bradford, 249.
Bradninch, 8, 54, 87, 248, 307, 570.
Bradstone, 12, 27, 49, 56-58, 239, 310.
Bradworthy, 100, 160, 249, 285.
Brampford Speke, 66, 247, 257, 407, 431, 511, 512.
Brannock, 10, 586.
Branscombe, 15, 43, 55, 58, 106, 124, 131, 159, 167, 206, 316.

Brantyngham, 43, 71, 101, 117, 120, 196, 229, 252, 291, 527.
Branwallader, 15.
Bratton Clovelly, 49, 212, 248, 287, 565.
Bratton Fleming, 178.
Braunton, 10, 55, 57, 113, 249, 288, 310, 440, 466, 572, 575.
Breaca, 6.
Brendon, 249.
Brent Tor, 56, 58, 495.
Brewer, Lord, 68, 85, 86, 100, 112.
Bridestowe, 126, 263, 265, 281, 282, 301.
Bridford, 248.
Bridgerule, 27, 49, 57, 440, 563, 569.
Bridget, 2, 6, 48.
Bridgetown, 544.
Briefs, 139, 401.
Brightley, 82, 248.
Brioc, 7.
Brixham, 73, 160, 212, 263, 428, 450, 575.
Broadclyst, 73, 160, 212.
Broadhembury, 62, 149, 167, 187, 206, 248.
Broad Hempston, 257, 284, 301.
Broadoak, 207.
Broadwoodkelly, 248, 578.
Broadwoodwidger, 91, 177, 185, 251, 534.
Bronescombe, 51, 60, 69, 82, 85, 88, 92, 97, 98, 117, 118, 123, 134, 147, 162, 163.
Brownrigg, 405, 421.
Bruere, 68, 79, 85, 112, 114, 117, 125, 509.
Brushford, 90, 558, 569.
Buckerell, 167, 207, 248.
Buckfast, 9, 25, 55, 56, 58, 64, 65, 80, 125, 161, 170, 249, 262, 263, 352, 354, 357, 358, 361.
Buckfastleigh, 249, 303.
Buckland Brewer, 100, 285, 464.
Buckland Filleigh, 250, 316, 440.
Buckland-in-the-Moor, 570.
Buckland Monachorum, 65, 88, 161, 170, 180, 215, 217, 249, 262, 263, 300, 319, 353, 354, 357.
Bucks Mills, 494.
Bude, 7, 494.
Budleigh Salterton, 544.
Budoc, 2, 7, 56.
Bulkworthy, 100.
Buller, 468.
Burhweald, Bp., 22, 23, 34, 40.
Buriena, 7.
Burlescombe, 94, 248, 568.
Burneir, 16, 20, 407.
Burrington, 56, 57, 170, 249.
Butterleigh, 558.
Bytton, 91, 96, 115, 123, 164, 213, 561.

Caellwic, 18, 20, 55.
Calendar, 45, 48.
Calstock, 29, 449, 452, 579.
Calverleigh, 248, 268, 578.
Camborne, 4, 7, 465, 483.
Camelford, 482.
Canonsleigh, 65, 94, 161, 170, 298, 303, 329, 353, 354, 357.
Canterbury, Abps., 16, 18, 24, 41-43, 48, 87, 95, 105-107, 111, 116, 120, 122, 124, 126, 133, 134, 142, 145, 146, 190, 198, 262, 268, 386, 393, 396, 512.
Carannog, 6.
Cardinham Family, 60.
Cardynham, 41.
Carey, 471.
Cargoll, 124, 134, 175, 407.
Carmelites, 65, 119, 264, 359.
Carn Brea, 483.
Carnmenellis, 494.
Carswell, 62, 64, 79, 161, 325, 352.
Carthusians, 80.
Cary, 394, 403, 404.
Catrik, 294.
Chacewater, 494.
Chagford, 130, 450.

Champernowne Family, 220, 367.
Chancellors, 112, 113, 125, 149, 159, 188, 203, 531.
Chantries, 206, 252, 348.
Chapels, 265, 286.
Chard, Bp., 85, 118.
Charles, 9, 56, 58.
Charles I, 358, 579.
Charles Church, Plymouth, 422, 450, 462.
Charlestown, 494.
Chawleigh, 249.
Cheldon, 249.
Cheriton Bishop, 248, 281, 564.
Cheriton Fitzpaine, 257.
Chevithorne, 535.
CHICHESTER, 106.
Chichester Family, 87, 367.
Chidham, 124, 194.
Chittlehamholt, 494.
Chittlehampton, 39, 250, 283, 543, 556, 584.
Chivelstone, 463, 573.
Christow, 67, 212.
Chrodegang, 43, 90.
Chubbe, Abbot, 69.
Chudleigh, 55, 58, 124, 125, 127, 149, 159, 175, 194, 231, 232, 237, 248, 259, 302, 327, 361.
Chudleigh Knighton, 535.
Chulmleigh, 11, 32, 65, 150, 249, 281, 514.
Church-building, 266, 284, 307, 450, 494, 535, 544.
Church Congresses, 545.
Churchstanton, 310, 470.
Churchstow, 26, 56, 58, 285.
Cistercians, 64, 80, 83, 85, 89, 103, 209.
CLAGETT, 452, 459.
Clannaborough, 9, 56, 57.
Clare, Countess, 95.
Claville Family, 94.
Clawton, 163.
Cleder, 11.
Clerks, 435, 455.
Clovelly, 150, 463, 562.
Cluniacs, 62-64, 77, 103.
Clyst, 65, 124, 125, 175, 194, 259, 270, 276, 281, 302, 361.
Clyst Honiton, 43, 55, 57, 206, 312.
Clyst Hydon, 441.
Clyst St George, 247.
Clyst St Lawrence, 282, 564, 581.
Cockington, 100, 566, 573.
Coffinswell, 56, 58, 168, 564.
Cofton, 494.
Colaton Raleigh, 113.
Colcombe, 240.
Colebrooke, 55, 57, 107, 168, 206, 566, 569.
Coleridge, 27, 139, 187, 578.
Coleridge Family, 586.
Coletone, Dean, 190, 196, 201.
Collaton St Mary, 100, 494.
Collegiate Churches, 64, 65, 98, 103, 137, 139, 361.
Collen, 12.
Columba, 8, 15.
Colyford, 240.
Colyton, 56, 58, 105, 159, 167, 207, 239, 267, 379, 420, 440, 451.
Combe-in-Teignhead, 177, 276, 431, 564.
Combe Martin, 129, 281, 466.
Combe Pyne, 248, 557, 561.
Combe Raleigh, 248, 470, 558.
Comoere, Bp., 23, 34.
Compton Gifford, 535.
Conan, Bp., 18, 23.
Confirmations, 128, 152, 302, 423, 464, 544.
Consecrations, 130, 194, 422, 494, 535, 544.
Constantine, King, 9, 10.
Convocation, 433, 438, 447, 472, 497.
Cookbury, 172.
Copplestone Cross, 580.
Cornelly, 461.
Cornish Rising, 335, 338, 359.
Cornwall, Earls of, 37, 77, 115, 116, 133, 140, 158, 222.

Cornworthy, 63, 65, 68, 78, 96, 161, 170, 262, 263, 351, 353, 564.
Coryton, 12, 27, 56, 58, 249.
Cotleigh, 248.
COTTON, 388-394, 403, 404.
Countess Wear, 494.
Countisbury, 82, 451, 462.
Courtenay, Abp., 253, 255, 259, 268, 277, 292.
Courtenay Family, 66, 71, 82, 87, 177, 209, 221, 222, 240, 259, 268, 319, 469, 527.
COURTENAY, H. R., 469.
COURTENAY, P., 319.
Cove, 535.
COVERDALE, 344, 383, 538.
Cowick, 61, 64, 66, 113, 161, 170, 212, 241, 259, 285, 352, 353.
Cowie, Dean, 234, 543.
Cowley, 187, 495.
Creda, Creed, 8.
Crediton, 13, 17, 23, 25, 26, 41, 131, 175, 176, 255, 288, 302, 440, 481.
Crediton Church, 55, 57, 65, 139, 169, 177, 186, 198, 212, 224, 232, 247, 277, 281, 298, 307, 361, 548.
Crediton Manor, 124, 125, 274, 361, 373, 381.
Crosses, 4, 580.
Crukerne, Abbot, 82.
Crusades, 82, 84, 108, 112, 130, 158.
Crutched Friars, 65, 121.
Cruwys Morchard, 248, 441, 569.
Cuddenbeak, 96, 97, 280, 407.
Cullompton, 55, 57, 66, 87, 89, 248, 303, 437, 470, 481, 551, 569.
Culmbridge, 248.
Culmstock, 43, 55, 57, 167, 206, 521, 575.
Curig, 10, 12, 56.
Cury, 283, 554.

Damascus, Abp. of, 120.
Daniel, Bp., 21, 23.
Dartington, 54, 249.
Dartmouth, 9, 56.
Davidstow, 273, 535, 585.
Dawlish, 40, 55, 58, 106, 160, 168, 248, 276, 495.
Day, 86.
Deaneries, 57, 158.
Dean Prior, 92, 249, 276, 414, 564.
Deans of Exeter, 82, 112, 143, 159, 188, 189, 196, 201, 315, 319, 330, 348, 368, 392, 429, 498, 509, 536.
Dedications, 129, 194.
Denbury, 56, 58, 171, 248.
Dennis, Preb., 472.
Devon, Earls of, 61, 66, 71, 79, 88, 221, 222, 259, 268.
Devonport, 478, 480, 493, 504, 535, 553.
Devonshire Rising, 335, 339, 346.
Devoran, 535.
Dingerein, Dinnurrin, 16.
Diocesan Conferences, 534.
Diptford, 249.
Disen, 8.
Dispensations, 242, 289.
Dodbrooke, 249.
Doddeton, 85.
Doddiscombsleigh, 248, 455, 577.
Dolton, 250, 327, 464, 563.
Domesday, 16, 26, 28, 31-35, 37, 52, 53, 57, 59.
Dominica, 8.
Dominicans, 65, 113, 115, 117, 130, 171, 178, 264, 304, 312, 358, 359, 363.
Doune, T., 145.
Drake Family, 357, 380, 451.
Dunheved, 35, 59, 98.
Dynham Family, 90, 202, 275, 276.

Eadgyfu, 21, 30, 49.
Eadwulf, Bp., 18, 20, 26.
Ealdred, Bp., 23.
Earle, Bp., 533, 543.
East Allington, 432.

East Anstey, 250, 385.
East Budleigh, 247, 573.
East Ogwell, 248.
East Putford, 100.
Edgar, King, 23, 25, 29, 34.
Edgcumbe Family, 62, 319, 585.
Edith, Queen, 41, 42, 55.
Edmonds, Canon, 543.
Edred, King, 21, 23, 34.
Edward the Confessor, 20, 22, 23, 39-42, 51.
Edward the Elder, 18, 20, 28.
Edward I, 83, 115, 130, 143, 146, 158, 173.
Edward II, 89, 119, 174, 185.
Edward III, 36, 120, 201, 211, 230, 252, 254.
Egg Buckland, 249.
Eggesford, 249, 432, 462.
Egloshayle, 16, 55, 124, 139, 148, 160, 250, 347, 385, 373.
Egloskerry, 10, 12, 98.
Elfrida, Queen, 29.
Endelient, 11.
Episcopal Registers, 123, 141.
Erc, Erth, 7.
Ermington, 212, 249, 263, 286, 569.
Escot, 494.
Euny, 7.
Exbourne, 178, 220.
Excommunications, 133, 143, 155, 221, 224, 512.
Exeter, 9, 11, 13, 15, 18-21, 25, 38, 41, 53, 56, 65, 105, 111, 202, 246, 288, 298, 340, 380, 394, 428, 440-443, 478, 588, 594.
Exeter Abbey, 19, 21, 24, 42, 64, 65, 104, 588.
,, All Hallows' Churches, 13, 56, 57, 281, 365, 367, 411, 412.
,, Bedford Church, 358.
,, Cathedral, 50, 55, 59, 104, 141, 147, 162, 164, 187, 194, 220, 228, 244, 267, 299, 305, 365, 369, 376, 407, 410, 421, 425, 475, 525, 548, 576.
Exeter Chapter, 42, 106, 112, 117, 144, 148, 159, 196, 206, 247, 383, 422, 509, 529, 530, 541.
,, Chapter-house, 113, 232, 306, 318.
,, Cloisters, 196, 267, 291, 306, 411, 422.
,, Close, 144, 202, 274, 283, 301, 416.
,, Crutched Friars, 65, 121.
,, Dominicans, 65, 115, 117, 119, 171, 178.
,, Emmanuel, 544.
,, Franciscans, 65, 115, 118, 171.
,, Holy Trinity, 13, 56, 57, 248, 284, 380, 412.
,, Lady Chapel, 25, 50, 108, 162, 165, 176.
,, Palace, 143, 312, 319, 407, 411, 422, 459, 535.
,, St Cuthbert's, 13, 56, 57.
,, St David's, 13, 56, 57, 367, 368, 553, 563.
,, St Edmund's, 248, 307, 380, 411.
,, St George's, 264, 307, 366, 412.
,, St James's, 248, 553.
,, St James's Priory, 64, 79, 161, 170, 209, 242, 247, 352.
,, St John's, 412.
,, St John's Hospital, 65, 171, 183, 232, 247, 289, 312, 412.
,, St Kerrian's, 13, 56, 57, 366, 367, 412.
,, St Lawrence's, 368, 403, 412.
,, St Leonard's, 300, 494.
,, St Martin's, 55, 57, 248, 380, 412.

Exeter, St Mary Arches, 57, 217, 248, 366, 367, 380, 411, 474, 554.
,, St Mary Mag. Hospital, 65, 171, 187.
,, St Mary Major, 13, 56, 179, 248, 259, 274, 280, 317, 366, 380, 411, 478.
,, St Mary's in the Castle, 55, 57, 101, 230, 247.
,, St Mary Steps, 38, 412, 563, 566.
,, St Matthew's, 535, 553.
,, St Michael's, 553.
,, St Nicholas's Priory, 52, 64, 65, 115, 126, 161, 170, 247, 257, 312, 353, 355, 357, 372.
,, St Olave's, 52, 55, 57, 66, 248, 366, 367, 412, 444.
,, St Pancras's, 13, 366, 368, 412, 563.
,, St Paul's, 11, 13, 38, 56, 57, 248, 412.
,, St Petrock's, 13, 56, 57, 248, 364, 366, 411, 559, 572, 575.
,, St Sidwell's, 38, 55, 57, 66, 368, 411, 558, 584.
,, St Stephen's, 55, 57, 248, 282, 366, 368, 412.
,, St Thomas's, 284, 342.
,, Schools, 183.
Exeter Book, 44.
Exeter College, 171, 181, 291.
Exminster, 56, 58, 173, 248, 259, 268, 269, 394.
Exmouth, 285, 440, 553.
Exwick, 61, 66.

Falmouth, 385, 422, 440, 450, 482, 551.
Faringdon, 124, 131, 140, 194.
Farringdon, 309, 542, 563.
Farway, 248, 470.
Felgeriis, R., 94.
Feniton, 248.
Fen Ottery, 289, 450.
Feock, 8.
Fiacc, 8.
Filleigh, 283.
First Fruits, 214, 346.
FISHER, 469.
Fissacre, Prior, 135.
Fitz-Baldwin, 61, 66.
Fitzford, 495, 553.
Fitz-Nicholas, W., 76.
Fitz-Ralph, J., 116.
Flushing, 494.
Forde, 65, 80, 81, 85, 86, 108, 161, 170, 325, 353, 354, 357.
Forrabury, 90, 251.
Fowey, 212, 440.
FOXE, 320, 323, 324, 329.
Franciscans, 65, 115, 116, 122, 139, 171, 264, 303, 305, 312, 358, 359, 363.
Fremington, 90, 249, 283, 288, 310, 466.
French Wars, 36, 62, 67, 74, 89, 99, 211, 272, 275, 290, 293, 303.
Friaries, 65, 103, 115, 209, 358, 363.
Frithelstock, 65, 78, 91, 161, 170, 172, 187, 209, 353, 354, 357, 464.

Gandy, Bp., 431.
GAUDEN, 418, 442.
George III, 468, 470.
Georgeham, 159, 249, 288.
Geraint, Gerontius, King, 13, 19.
German, 5, 33, 56, 550, 586.
Germochus, King, 6.
Gidleigh, 248.
Gilbertines, 101.
Gittisham, 240, 248, 578.
Glasney, 65, 137, 198, 212, 232, 250, 256, 276, 277, 299, 302, 362.
Godolphin, 494.

Golant, 12, 584.
Goodleigh, 249, 282.
Goran, 33.
Gorham, G. C., 503, 510.
Graduates, 211, 308, 309, 384, 404, 441, 503.
Grammar Schools, 224.
Grampound, 280.
GRANDISSON, 3, 35, 69-71, 92, 97-99, 121, 124, 192, 237, 256, 549.
Grandisson Family, 192, 225, 227, 230, 232, 238.
Greneville, Sir T., 218.
Guerir, 37.
Gulval, 250, 483.
Gulworthy, 494.
Gunwalloe, 5, 556.
Gwen, 12.
Gwethenoc, 5.
Gyldene, W., 220.
Gytha, 31, 90.

Haccombe, 65, 224, 382, 561, 578.
Halberton, 248, 481, 485, 569.
HALL, 395-404, 455, 538, 591.
Halsetown, 494.
Halwill, 249.
Hannington, Bp., 587.
Harberton, 54, 169, 392, 564, 569.
Harbertonford, 494.
Harding, S., 80.
Harewood, 29.
Harford, 9, 56, 58, 249.
Harpford, 212.
Harracott, 495.
Hartland, 11, 31, 55, 57, 280, 287, 307, 393, 463, 464, 556, 569, 573, 584.
Hartland Abbey, 31, 90, 126, 160, 161, 170, 249, 256, 273, 275, 300, 353, 354, 357.
Hatherland, 372.
Hatherleigh, 56, 58, 248, 280, 298, 421, 578, 584.
Hayle, 6.
Haynes, Dean, 313, 369.
Heanton Punchardon, 145, 218, 288, 308.
Heavitree, 68, 145, 248, 287, 403, 494, 553.
Helen, 12, 56.
Helland, 12, 250, 338.
Helston, 224, 280, 337, 465, 482, 483, 584.
Hemerdon, 249.
Hemyock, 566.
Hennock, 38, 39, 100, 248, 263, 571.
Henry I, 35, 37, 62.
Henry VI, 67, 74, 79, 312.
Henry VII, 88.
Henry VIII, 72, 116, 332, 353, 361, 363, 365, 368, 370.
Hermits of St Augustine, 65, 120, 121.
Herodsfoot, 494.
Hessenford, 494.
Hieretha, 39, 584.
Highampton, 248, 553, 564.
High Bickington, 250, 466.
Hippo, Bp. of, 66, 359.
Hoker, J., 50, 355.
Holbeton, 26, 263, 325, 569.
Holcombe, 40.
Holcombe Burnell, 248, 563.
Holcombe Rogus, 212.
Hollacombe, 9, 56, 57, 557.
Holne, 38, 290, 571.
Holsworthy, 249, 280, 464.
Holy Wells, 5, 9, 12, 38, 39, 583.
Honeychurch, 248, 553, 563.
Honiton, 131, 243, 275, 297, 382, 385, 437, 440, 465, 495.
Hooe, 494.
Horrabridge, 290, 494, 544.
Horsley, 124, 125, 131, 140, 194.
Horwood, 249.
Hospitallers, 65, 101, 102.
Hospitals, 65.
Huccaby, 495.
Huish, 250, 263, 421.

Huntsham, 248.
Huntshaw, 307.
Huxham, 247.
Hyspania, Canon, 146.

Ia, 7.
Iddesleigh, 250.
Ide, 43, 55, 58, 421.
Ideford, 248.
Ilfracombe, 160, 175, 249, 288, 466, 494, 552.
Illogan, 465, 483.
Ilsington, 248, 550.
Indract, 8.
Indulgences, 275, 285, 290, 297, 327.
Institutions, 210, 245, 261, 307, 360, 386.
Instow, 57, 249, 288.
Ipplepen, 65, 94, 161, 212, 248, 263, 353, 440, 550, 561, 570.
Ive, 11.
Ivybridge, 290, 494, 535.

Jacobstow, 5, 461, 565.
James, 5.
Joel of Totnes, 54, 55, 61, 62, 105.
John Devonius, 84.
JOHN THE CHANTER, 108.
Juliana, 11.
Just, 8.
Jutwara, 39.

Kellond, 450.
Kelly, 127, 249, 525, 577.
Kelly (Egloshayle), 20, 55.
Kenheuder, 11.
Kenn, 38, 239, 243, 248, 385, 451, 569, 571.
Kenstec, Bp., 16.
Kentisbeare, 470, 569.
Kentisbury, 441.
Kenton, 9, 56, 58, 160, 187, 248, 327, 420, 440, 451, 556, 569.
Kenwyn, 118, 127, 130, 376, 492.
KEPPEL, 458, 465.
Kilkhampton, 218, 220, 258, 379, 460, 464, 569.
KING, 321.
Kingsbridge, 280, 285, 300, 399, 440, 466, 573.
King's Kerswell, 56, 58, 168.
King's Nympton, 340.
King's Teignton, 161.
Kingston, 286.
Kingswear, 135.
Knowstone, 90, 250, 504.
Kylkhampton, Abbot, 99.

LACY, 67, 93, 94, 99, 118, 296, 323.
Lamerton, 49, 249.
Lammana, 36, 64, 76, 162, 251, 352.
Lamorran, 250, 556.
LAMPLUGH, 426, 442, 444, 496.
Landcross, 24, 249, 462.
Landewednack, 5, 24, 250, 362.
Landkey, 24, 113, 284, 462, 466.
Landoho, 36.
Landrake, 8, 23, 24, 250.
Landscove, 24, 494.
Landulph, 23, 24.
Landwithan, 18, 20, 55.
Laneast, 11, 39, 98, 482, 484, 553.
Langtree, 24, 250, 464, 543.
Lanherne, 16.
Lanhydrock, 24.
Lanivet, 223, 250, 324.
Lanlivery, 212, 458.
Lannarth, 494.
Lanreath, 566.
Lansallos, 24.
Lanteglos-by-Camelford, 24, 280, 432.
Lanteglos-by-Fowey, 4, 24, 251.
Lanyon, 266.
Lapford, 504.

Latimer, Bp., 116.
Launcells, 90, 250, 572.
Launceston, 11, 16, 39, 60, 127, 131, 171, 275, 287, 300, 302, 327, 337, 342, 440, 459, 551.
Launceston Priory, 35, 65, 98, 105, 126, 132, 135, 161, 170, 187, 209, 289, 353, 354.
LAVINGTON, 444, 453, 459, 479, 481.
Lawhitton, 16, 20, 55, 124, 126, 175, 251, 280, 302, 407.
Lecchelade, Prec., 144.
Lecturers, 398.
Lee, 288, 494.
Lelant, 27, 139, 280, 286.
LEOFRIC, 16, 23, 25, 33, 40, 60, 104, 162.
Leofric Missal, 27, 45.
Lepers, 171, 275, 288, 290.
Leusden, 494.
Levan, 8.
Lew Trenchard, 9, 249, 385, 569.
Lezant, 377, 382, 385, 392.
Lifton, 49, 249, 263, 283, 481.
Linkinhorne, 98, 584.
Liskeard, 60, 98, 180, 221, 280, 362, 381, 440, 451, 460, 465, 483, 573.
Littleham (North), 249, 462, 566, 579.
Littleham (South), 56, 57, 113, 247, 285.
Little Petherick, 10, 16, 566, 569.
Little St Budock, 7.
Little Torrington, 250, 325.
Loddiswell, 263, 466.
Lollards, 291, 303, 323.
London Palace, 123, 124, 129, 131, 186, 200, 306, 322, 361.
Looe, 36, 127, 290, 440, 460, 461, 494.
Lostwithiel, 280, 283, 385, 565.
Lowe, Dean, 498, 509, 514.
Loxbeare, 248.
Loxhore, 249.
Ludgvan, 250, 310, 483.
Luffincott, 249, 460.
Lundy, 12, 56, 57, 249, 436, 544.
Luppitt, 82, 87, 248, 535, 563.
Lustleigh, 150, 248, 563, 578.
Luton, 494.
Luxulyan, 584.
Lydford, 9, 30, 53, 56, 58, 61, 130, 139, 249, 282, 563.
Lyfing, 22, 23, 31, 40, 50.
Lympstone, 281, 284, 563.
Lynton, 82, 462, 464, 466.

Maben, 11.
Madron, Abbot, 8.
Maker, 585.
Malborough, 535.
Mamhead, 248, 521.
Manaccan, 36, 138.
Manaton, 248.
Manors (Episcopal), 159, 328, 361, 407.
Manumissions, 23, 27, 30, 34, 49, 140.
Marazion, 280, 286, 295, 465, 483.
Marhamchurch, 11, 90, 460.
Mariansleigh, 11, 250, 462.
Maristow, 584.
MARSHAL, 104, 109-111.
Marsh Barton, 65, 93, 161, 300, 352, 353.
Martinhoe, 249, 587.
Martyn, Hy., 586.
Marwood, 175, 288, 466, 495, 566.
Marystowe, 249.
Mawnan, 36, 39, 250.
Meavy, 217, 249.
Meeth, 250.
Melor, 6.
Membury, 554.
Mendicants, 65, 114, 118, 122, 210, 264, 277.
Menfre, 11.
Menheniot, 289, 297, 300, 319.
Meopham, Abp., 199, 205.
Meriet, Chanc., 203.

Merther, 450, 461.
Merton, 60, 250.
Mevagissey, 127, 250, 483.
Mewan, 12.
Milemead, 266.
Millbrook, 494, 553.
Milton Abbot, 56, 58, 249, 584.
Milton Damarel, 263, 282, 464.
Minor Orders, 176, 210, 259, 260, 281.
Minster, 36, 64, 76, 162, 170, 179, 212, 241, 251, 352.
Mitchell, 280.
Mithian, 494.
Modbury, 187, 212, 223, 249, 257, 263, 308, 440, 461, 495.
Modbury Priory, 56, 58, 64, 74, 161, 170, 249, 353.
Mohun Family, 86, 100.
Molland, 90, 250, 289, 504.
Monasteries, 17, 24, 60, 64, 128, 161, 187, 208, 260, 262, 303, 332, 350, 591.
Monkleigh, 91, 172, 212, 249.
Monkokehampton, 258.
Monkton, 207.
Morchard Bishop, 55, 57, 255, 282, 302, 307, 327, 361, 454.
Morebath, 248, 361.
Moreton Hampstead, 263, 319, 440.
Mortain, Earls of, 35, 54, 59, 60, 80.
Mortehoe, 249, 252, 288, 572, 580.
Morvah, 266, 483.
Morval, 251.
Morwell, 266.
Morwenna, 11.
Morwenstow, 11, 250, 430, 441, 554, 584.
Mount Edgcumbe, 385.
Mount Hawke, 494.
Mousehole, 171, 285, 297, 483.
Mudros, 483.
Murimouth, Canon, 190, 204.
Musbury, 248.
Nectan, 11, 31, 56, 584.
Neot, 37.
Netherexe, 66.
NEVILLE, 314, 323.
Newenham, 65, 86, 139, 161, 170, 232, 241, 353, 361.
Newnham, 385.
Newport, 170, 494.
Newton Abbot, 101, 495.
Newton Ferrers, 55, 58, 263, 377, 385, 392.
Newton Poppleford, 247, 309, 494.
Newton St Cyres, 43, 93, 207, 247, 317.
Newton St Petrock, 9, 56, 58, 250,
Newton Tracy, 249, 462.
Non, 12, 56.
Nonjurors, 430.
Non-residence, 257, 448, 468, 497, 501.
Northam, 56, 57, 298, 451, 464, 550.
North Bovey, 216, 217, 248, 574.
North Hill, 251.
North Huish, 53.
Northleigh, 96, 248.
North Lew, 248, 317.
North Molton, 160, 211, 250, 481.
North Petherwyn, 5, 127, 534.
North Tamerton, 98, 482.
North Tawton, 248, 340, 464, 481.
Northwode Family, 220, 230, 238.
Norton, 207.
Nuns, 68.
Nymet Rowland, 249.
Offwell, 462, 578.
Okeford, 96, 248, 385.
Okehampton, 27, 49, 53, 57, 58, 81, 113, 130, 135, 177, 212, 248, 307, 440, 450, 451, 464.
OLDHAM, 72, 93, 98, 118, 323-329.
Oldridge, 212.
Ordgar, Earl, 17, 29, 30, 34, 49.

Ordinations, 129, 131, 132, 153, 175, 242, 258, 280, 302, 308, 323, 325, 359, 360, 373, 383, 384, 403, 544.
Ordulf, Earl, 21, 29, 30.
Organs, 362, 422, 434.
Ornaments, 153, 156, 231, 361, 500.
OSBERN, 27, 51-58, 104.
Otterton, 56, 57, 212, 247, 535.
Otterton Priory, 64, 74, 161, 170, 179, 241, 257, 303, 353.
Ottery, 56, 58, 65, 83, 94, 111, 130, 135, 160, 198, 212, 232, 248, 277, 298, 361, 440, 481, 549.
Oxford, 44, 45, 150, 178, 181, 258, 281.

Padarn, Bp., 5.
Padstow, 7, 9, 10, 12, 16, 287, 552.
Paignton, 55, 58, 124, 125, 131, 134, 149, 159, 160, 170, 230, 248, 263, 280, 302, 327, 544.
Pancraswyke, 100.
Par, 494.
Parkham, 580.
Parracombe, 9, 249, 466.
Patrick, Bp., 5, 8, 9, 48.
Patteson, Bp., 582, 587.
Paul, 11, 38.
Pawton, 16, 18, 20, 55, 124, 126, 129, 131, 159, 175, 255, 280, 302.
Payhembury, 248.
PELHAM, 470.
Pelynt, 12, 82, 251, 341, 438, 443.
Pencoys, 535.
Pendeen, 494.
Penitentiaries, 148, 152, 159, 179, 210, 264.
Penponds, 494.
Penryn, 124, 131, 137, 175, 221, 276, 280, 342, 407, 460.
Penwerris, 494.
Penzance, 11, 266, 364, 437, 451, 459, 460, 465, 483, 494, 535.
Perran-ar-Worthal, 7.
Peterhays, 191, 407.
Petersmarland, 63, 462.
Peter's Pence, 107, 213, 215, 256.
Petrock, 9, 12, 26, 33, 56. 584, 586.
Petrockstowe, 9, 26, 56, 58, 250.
Petton, 9, 56, 58, 494.
Peverell, M., 63.
Philippa, Queen, 69, 252.
Philleigh, 16, 250.
PHILLPOTTS, 230, 490, 526, 529, 532.
Phillpotts' Studentships, 496.
Pilgrimages, 39, 77, 313.
Pillaton, 127, 250.
Pilton, 171, 275, 288, 290, 298, 399, 466, 558, 559, 566, 573.
Pilton Priory, 28, 64, 78, 126, 161, 170, 179, 187, 249, 288, 300, 353.
Pinhoe, 56, 57, 66, 407, 495, 563, 581.
Piran, 7, 586.
Pluralities, 211, 282, 447, 468, 497.
Plymouth, 28, 93, 119, 211, 216, 246, 263, 265, 275, 276, 280, 285, 288, 290, 338, 348, 399, 440, 443, 444, 480, 493, 508, 515, 535, 544, 553.
Plymouth Friaries, 65, 116, 359.
Plymouth, St Andrew's, 307, 437, 451, 462, 465, 551.
Plympstoke, R., 173, 184.
Plympton, 54, 58, 65, 131, 160, 280, 288, 290, 307, 552, 558, 559.
Plympton Priory, 28, 55, 65, 90, 92-95, 105, 106, 119, 126, 135, 161, 170, 216, 261-263, 300, 326, 350-354, 357, 361.
Plymstock, 56, 58, 494, 566.
Plymtree, 38, 187, 281, 316, 570.
Pollard Family, 340, 365.
Polltun, *see* Pawton.
Polruan, 7.
Polslo, 64, 68, 113, 126, 161, 170, 200, 257, 329, 353, 354, 357.
Poltimore, 247, 281, 563.

Pomeroy Family, 54, 60, 102, 134, 341.
Popes, 41, 72, 80, 96, 104, 120, 122, 124, 133, 143, 190, 198, 201, 205, 212, 242, 256, 269, 270, 295, 303.
Population, 59, 246, 534, 544.
Porte, Mayor, 145.
Porthleven, 494.
Port Isaac, 476, 482.
Portlemouth, 5, 56, 58, 249, 571.
Portscatho, 12.
Postbridge, 495.
Poughill (Cornwall), 98, 579.
Poughill (Devon), 66.
Poundstock, 11, 219, 441, 461, 579.
Powderham, 248, 268, 308, 432.
Precentors, 112, 113, 149, 159, 197, 531.
Preceptories, 65.
Premonstratensians, 65, 100.
Prest, Agnes, 374.
Princetown, 495.
Prynne, G. R., 498, 499, 506, 508, 540.
Puritans, 391, 396, 405, 420, 434, 527.
Pycot, Dean, 143.
Pyworthy, 441.

Quethiock, 250.
QUIVEL, 51, 95, 101, 115, 122, 141-163, 557.

Rackenford, 66, 248.
Radway, 361.
Raleigh, 249, 288.
Raleigh Family, 117, 218, 219.
Rame, 5, 127, 553.
Rattery, 249.
REDMAYNE, 322, 323.
Redruth, 7, 150, 250, 280, 286, 465, 482, 483.
Reskymer Family, 118.
Respryn, 207.
Revelstoke, 56, 58, 385, 494, 535.
Richard III, 319.
Roborough, 250, 258, 282.
Roborough (South), 89.
Roche, 133, 250, 565.
Rockbeare, 96.
Romansleigh, 17, 250, 584.
Roridge, 56, 58.
Roseash, 432.
Ross, 464-468, 479.
Rousdon, 535.
Ruan, 7.
Ruan Lanihorne, 7, 16, 281, 584.
Rumon, 17.
Rural Deans, 156, 455.
Russell, Lord, 342, 346, 358, 361.

St Adwena, 11.
St Agnes, 208, 465, 475, 482.
St Allen, 134, 250.
St Anthony-in-Meneage, 212, 461.
St Anthony-in-Roseland, 36, 65, 99, 127, 150, 162, 352.
St Austell, 12, 127, 130, 212, 250, 440, 460, 483, 533, 556, 584.
St Breage, 7, 60, 465, 569, 579.
St Breocke, 7, 16, 20, 55, 124, 129, 131, 402.
St Breward, 207, 553, 554, 585.
St Budeaux, 7, 56, 58, 463, 494.
St Budock, 7, 16, 138, 362, 385.
St Buryan, 8, 37, 65, 160, 177, 212, 214, 378, 552, 573, 588.
St Cleer, 4, 11, 161, 251, 281, 282, 460, 585.
St Clement, 212.
St Clether, 11, 127, 553, 585.
St Colan, 12, 138, 461.
St Columb Major, 8, 281, 322, 532, 569, 572.
St Columb Minor, 8, 297, 561.
St Constantine, 7, 149, 207, 250, 337, 450.
St Crantock, 6, 37, 65, 209, 211, 212, 223, 230, 250, 267, 276, 277, 282, 290, 585.

St Crowan, 161, 465, 483.
St Cubert, 250, 487.
St Cuby, 565.
St Cyricus, 36, 64, 79, 162, 352, 353.
St Day, 6, 494.
St Dominic, 8, 127, 250, 303.
St Elwyn, 535.
St Endellion, 4, 11, 65, 250.
St Enoder, 11, 138, 250.
St Erme, 147.
St Erth, 4, 7, 208, 250.
St Ervan, 16, 150.
St Eval, 16, 170.
St Ewe, 6, 458, 570.
St Feock, 8, 16, 138, 250, 535, 556.
St Gennys, 98, 250, 482.
St German's, 5, 15-18, 22, 33, 60, 65, 96, 107, 124, 126, 127, 130, 131, 161, 170, 175, 256, 280, 302, 332, 353, 354, 357, 440, 451, 460, 550.
St Germoe, 7, 283.
St Gerrans, 12, 16, 17, 99, 124, 127, 250, 385.
St Giles-in-the-Heath, 56, 98, 534.
St Giles-in-the-Wood, 303, 462, 464.
St Gluvias, 16, 250, 308, 325, 521.
St Goran, 127, 138, 250, 407.
St Grade, 250.
St Gwennap, 11, 207, 250, 465, 483-485, 556.
St Gwinear, 161, 181, 207, 250.
St Gwithian, 59, 553.
St Hilary, 212, 250, 483.
St Issey, 16, 109, 207.
St Ive, 11, 65, 102, 177, 250.
St Ives, 7, 286, 465, 474, 477, 482, 483, 487, 570.
St John, 485.
St Juliot, 11, 98.
St Just-inPenwith, 4, 7, 8, 250, 297, 465, 483, 510, 553, 579.
St Just-in-Roseland, 16, 160, 250, 362.
St Kea, 138, 250, 376, 561, 564.
St Keverne, 7, 37, 160, 161, 337, 338, 440.
St Kew, 36, 250, 579.
St Keyne, 251, 585.
St Lawrence, Dean, 190 .
St Mabe, 16, 561, 563.
St Mabyn, 11, 241.
St Madron, 59, 171, 250, 266, 553, 585.
St Mary Church, 43, 55, 58, 106, 168, 248, 518, 533, 563.
St Mary Tavy, 249, 460, 569, 578.
St Mawgan-in-Meneage, 250.
St Mawgan-in-Pydar, 16, 570.
St Mellion, 127, 250.
St Merryn, 16, 250, 440.
St Mewan, 12, 250.
St Michael Caerhays, 127.
St Michael Penkevil, 250, 560.
St Michael's, Clyst, 65.
St Michael's Mount, 36, 60, 64, 77, 162, 170, 209, 250, 303, 352, 357, 362.
St Minver, 11, 250, 303.
St Mullion, 142, 207, 362, 572.
St Mylor, 6, 16, 135, 556.
St Nectan, 208.
St Neot, 37, 160, 212, 563, 578, 585.
St Newlyn, East, 11, 124, 127, 134, 149, 159, 203, 204, 250, 297, 432.
St Newlyn, West, 483, 494.
St Perranuthno, 7, 109, 250, 441.
St Perranzabulo, 7, 37, 59, 207, 553.
St Peter Tavy, 249, 258.
St Petroc Minor, 10, 250.
St Phillack, 4, 250, 563.
St Probus, 37, 65, 113, 159, 164, 250, 331, 531, 556, 563.
St Ruan Major, 7, 250.
St Ruan Minor, 7, 250.
St Samson, 461.
St Sennen, 7, 483.
St Sithney, 138, 287.

St Stephen's-by-Launceston, 35, 98, 127, 130, 553.
St Stephen's-by-Saltash, 000.
St Stephen's-in-Brannel, 250, 465.
St Stythians, 150, 483, 484.
St Teath, 65, 230, 251, 275.
St Thomas's-by-Launceston, 98, 297, 565, 580.
St Uny Lelant, 7, 250, 286, 287.
St Veep, 64, 79, 212, 251, 461.
St Veryan, 207, 250, 463.
St Wendron, 224, 450, 451, 465, 483, 563.
St Wenn, 12, 161, 250.
St Winnow, 11, 113, 187, 207, 208, 250, 579.
St Zennor, 6, 138.
Salcombe, 43, 494.
Salcombe Regis, 55, 58, 167, 187, 207, 248.
Saltash, 440, 535, 561.
Sampford Courtenay, 263, 339-342, 464, 574.
Sampford Peverell, 63, 248.
Sampford Spiney, 350, 441, 463, 581.
Samson, 2, 12, 48.
Sancreed, 7, 113, 171, 207, 250, 299, 475.
Sanctuary, 136, 290.
Sandford, 26, 298, 573.
Sandford, Archd., 542.
Satterleigh, 250.
Saunton, 288.
Schools, 183, 224, 440, 524.
Scilly, 35, 209, 483.
Screens, 307, 374, 567.
Seaton, 56, 58, 248, 294, 297, 379, 451.
Seller, A., 431.
Sellon, Miss, 504.
Sennan, Abbot, 6.
Sennara, 6.
Shaldon, 462, 563.
Shaugh Prior, 463, 566.
Shebbear, 100, 250, 464.
Sheepstor, 89.
Sheepwash, 100, 298, 464.
Sheldon, 000.
Sherford, 55, 58, 463.
Sheviocke, 127.
Shillingford, 100.
Shirwell, 466.
Shobrooke, 142, 247, 385, 440, 443, 452, 496.
Shute, 167, 207, 420.
Sidbury, 43, 55, 58, 106, 159, 167, 207, 248, 450, 495, 553.
Sideman, Bp., 21, 25.
Sidmouth, 56, 58, 74, 212, 248, 470, 578.
Sidwell, 38, 584.
Silverton, 222, 258, 281, 389, 390, 394, 581.
Simon of Apulia, 51, 111.
Slapton, 65, 150, 265.
Sourton, 49, 265, 282, 301.
South Brent, 9, 26, 56, 58, 249, 301.
South Hill, 4, 12, 250, 300, 584.
South Huish, 495.
Southleigh, 248.
South Milton, 535, 563.
South Molton, 55, 58, 243, 283, 289, 332, 421, 465, 495.
South Petherwyn, 5, 251.
South Pool, 282, 284, 432, 562, 564.
South Tawton, 248, 464.
Sowton, 124, 140, 175, 194, 202, 242, 247, 258, 259, 282.
Sparkwell, 535.
Sparrow, 424, 432, 442, 443, 538.
Spreyton, 212.
Stafford, 51, 76, 92, 97, 182, 278.
Stapeldon, 28, 42, 68, 70, 73, 90, 96-99, 119, 123, 165, 172, 200, 527.
Stapeldon Family, 91, 172, 181, 185, 187, 220.
Staverton, 11, 43, 55, 58, 106, 169, 174, 249, 290, 302, 569.

Stephen, King, 105.
Sticklepath, 275, 481, 485.
Stipends, 149, 262, 263, 310, 382, 412, 502.
Stockleigh English, 247.
Stockleigh Pomeroy, 307.
Stoke Canon, 55, 57, 106, 168, 187, 207, 563.
Stoke Climsland, 49, 460.
Stoke Damarel, 217, 258, 493, 505, 544.
Stoke Fleming, 263.
Stoke Gabriel, 55, 58, 149, 159, 204, 249.
Stoke-in-Teignhead, 566.
Stokenham, 160, 179, 263, 327, 463, 466.
Stoke Rivers, 385.
Stonehouse, 89, 443, 493, 500, 535.
Stowford, 249.
Stratford, Abp., 203, 237.
Stratton, 51, 98, 243, 250, 460.
Strete, 535.
Subdeans, 148, 160.
Suffragan Bishops, 66, 85, 99, 130, 174, 279, 297, 316, 320, 323, 325, 331, 332, 351, 359, 372, 503, 526, 543.
Surplice Riots, 500.
Sutcliffe, Dean, 392.
Sutcombe, 249, 462.
Sutton, 28, 55, 58, 211, 216.
Sweyn, King, 25, 31, 43.
Swymbridge, 39, 55, 58, 113, 462, 466, 495, 504, 566.
Sydenham Damarel, 180, 249.
Synods of Exeter, 122, 149, 150, 513.

Taddiport, 275.
Talaton, 179, 451.
Talcarn, 76.
Talland, 36, 76, 98, 455, 456, 556.
Tamerton Foliot, 249, 290.
Tavistock, 160, 171, 239, 249, 266, 275, 280, 288, 290, 307, 308, 440, 451, 478, 485, 495, 551, 558, 562.
Tavistock Abbey, 17, 22, 29, 35, 50, 55, 56, 58, 68, 69, 74, 126, 161, 170, 249, 256, 262, 263, 274, 276, 299, 353, 354, 357, 358, 361.
Tawstock, 160, 172, 208, 218, 288, 466, 495, 566.
Taxatio, 35, 128, 158.
Tedburn St Mary, 177, 185.
Teigngrace, 248.
Teignmouth, 55, 58, 106, 297, 361, 440, 451, 462.
TEMPLE, 36, 519.
Temple, 102.
Templeton, 298.
Tenths, 96, 205, 214.
Tetcott, 249.
Theological Colleges, 495, 531, 594.
Thornbury, 267.
Thorncombe, 82, 325.
Thorverton, 149, 168.
Throwleigh, 248.
Thurlestone, 249.
Tideford, 494.
Tintagel, 14, 212, 251, 441, 451, 460, 553, 563, 587.
Tipton St John, 494.
Tiverton, 32, 54, 131, 132, 212, 248, 259, 273, 283, 287, 290, 298, 385, 401, 435, 440, 470, 481, 494, 525, 534, 551, 561.
Towednack, 5, 286, 560.
Townstal, 100, 120, 248, 266.
Tracy, Sir W., 68, 108.
Travellers' Rest, 495.
Treasurers, 112, 113, 159.
Trebigh, 65, 102.
Trefusis, Bp., 543.
Tregeare, 124, 127, 407.
Tregony, 60, 64, 127, 136, 162, 307, 353, 440, 461.
TRELAWNY, 429, 442, 443, 449, 468.
Treleigh, 494.

Treluswell, 16.
Tremaine, 5, 563.
Trematon, 49, 59, 60.
Tremur, R., 223.
Treneglos, 212.
Trentishoe, 587.
Tresco, 35, 64, 162, 352.
Treslothan, 494.
Tresmere, 5, 98, 482.
Trevalga, 10, 113.
Treverbyn, 494.
Trevethy, 11.
Trewell, 16.
Trewen, 249, 485.
Treworgey, 483.
Trewrennen, 266.
Truro, 65, 118, 127, 130, 171, 250, 280, 363, 385, 437, 440, 451, 456, 459, 483, 494, 552.
Truro Bishopric, 492, 532.
Trusham, 26, 56, 58, 180, 248, 563.
Tuckingmill, 494.
TURBERVILLE, 373, 383, 386.
Twitchen, 494.
Tywardreath, 60, 64, 75, 76, 126, 136, 161, 170, 179, 212, 241, 274. 303, 317, 353, 461.

Uffculme, 65, 85, 173, 220, 281, 283, 378, 481.
Ugborough, 100, 263, 432.
Umberleigh, 56, 58, 288.
Uploman, 248, 421.
Uplyme, 56, 58, 248, 432.
Upottery, 56, 58, 167, 206, 248.
Upton Hellions, 289.
Upton Pyne, 578.
Urith, 39.

Valletort Family, 28, 74.
VEYSEY, 96, 286, 330, 342, 344, 348, 351, 359, 360, 372, 383, 386.
Vicars Choral, 42, 109, 113, 197, 268, 411, 532.
Virginstow, 534.
Visitations, 126, 166, 201, 206, 268, 279, 326, 332, 333, 386, 390, 400, 423, 424, 459, 468.
Vivian, Bp., 99.

Wadebridge, 7, 483.
Walker, S., 455.
Walkhampton, 89, 170, 180, 249, 327, 463.
Warbeck, P., 88.
WARD, 421, 442.
WARELWAST, R., 94, 106.
WARELWAST, W., 27, 28, 34, 35, 52, 60, 104, 106, 110, 111.
Warkleigh, 222.
Warleggan, 223, 250, 461.
Washfield, 372, 569.
Washfield Pyne, 462.
Wear Giffard, 249.
Week St German's, 5, 56, 58, 91.
Week St Mary, 250, 257, 461, 482.
Welcombe, 11, 56, 57, 90, 566, 584.
Welsh, R., 342.
Wembury, 55, 58.
Wembworthy, 249, 553.
Wenappa, 11.
Werrington, 6, 98, 460, 534.
Wesley, J., 436, 454, 455, 457, 465, 467, 474.
West Alvington, 160, 392.
West Anstey, 9, 56, 58.
West Down, 170, 466.
West Hill, 494.
Westleigh, 9, 206, 474.
WESTON, 452, 459.
West Putford, 222, 249, 564.
Whimple, 38, 247, 432.
Whitchurch, 70, 170, 215, 239, 323.
Whitstone (Cornwall), 128, 131, 148, 223, 250, 461.
Whitstone (Devon), 248.
Widworthy, 248.

William I, 55.
William II, 52, 62.
William III, 428.
Winfrid, 19, 25, 48, 586.
Winkleigh, 113, 168, 207, 249, 464.
Winwaloe, 5, 48, 56.
Witheridge, 160, 289, 298, 385.
Withiel, 250.
Withleigh, 535.
Wolborough, 38, 100, 564, 571.
Wolfard, Abbot, 19, 25.
Wolford, 85.
Woodbury, 56, 57, 100, 109, 284, 495.
Woodbury Salterton, 494.
Woodleigh, 249, 562.
Woolfardisworthy (East), 247, 462.
Woolfardisworthy (West), 90.
Woolton, 377, 381-386.
Wulfsige, Bp., 23, 34.
Wycliffe, J., 224, 253, 264, 292.
Wydecombe-in-the-Moor, 139, 180, 248, 323, 462, 466, 556.
Wynter, Archd., 336, 338.

Yarcombe, 56, 58, 191, 212, 303.
Yarnscombe, 466.
Yealmpton, 56, 58, 219, 263, 385.

Zeal Monachorum, 9, 26, 56, 57, 249, 563.
Zouche Family, 62, 63.

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Rev. W. G. Cobbett, Evershot Rectory, Dorset.
Rev. the Hon. H. H. Courtenay, Powderham, Exeter.
The Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of Crediton, The Close, Exeter.
Miss B. F. Cresswell, 23 Wonford Road, Exeter.
Trinity College Library, Dublin.

Messrs Eland, 236 High Street, Exeter.
Rev. A. C. Evans, Lamerton Vicarage, Tavistock.
The Very Rev. the Dean of Exeter, The Deanery, Exeter.
The University College and City Library, Exeter.

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Colonel Freeman, Angel Corner, Bury St Edmund's.
Mr Geo. H. Fursdon, Fursdon, Thorverton.

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Preb. T. H. Howard, The Vicarage, Uffculme.
Rev. E. F. W. Hudson, Park Villa, Ilfracombe.

Rev. J. T. Jacob, Torre Vicarage, Torquay.
The John Rylands Library, Manchester.

The Rev. the Master of Kinloss, Tostock Place, Bury St Edmund's.

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Sir Pierce Lacy, Bart., Ampton Hall, Bury St Edmund's.
Rev. H. L. Leverton, Mawnan Sanctuary, Falmouth.

Miss Mackintosh, Morden Hall, Torquay.
Lt.-Colonel G. S. Meadows, Belgrove House, Lamerton.
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